

Late Correspondence
Received before Noon
Wednesday, May 5, 2026
Planning Commission May 6, 2026

Planning Commission

From: H. Hernandez <hh@imagists.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 1:27 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commission members -

As a District 5 resident of Berkeley, living blocks away from the North Shattuck area, and 1/2 mile from the Golden Block of Solano Ave., I'm writing to ask you to implement the Corridor Zoning plan without restriction to certain parcels.

The Corridor Zoning is, more than anything else, a step towards fair housing across the city - addressing the legacy of restrictive zoning that kept certain people from living in our most highly resourced neighborhoods.

The current proposal to implement zoning only for certain 'mixed use opportunity areas', i.e., specific parcels in each area, is unlike anything that was done for other areas in Berkeley. Doing so would reinforce the history of privilege and exclusion that Corridor Zoning is intended to lessen and run contrary to Council's original direction. It also breaks the goals in the Housing Element of 'achieving consistency among all transit and commercial corridors, especially between formerly red-lined areas and higher-resource areas'.

This proposal is also unnecessary. I understand the concerns regarding preserving our historic businesses. But the City staff's excellent analysis shows that few sites in each district are likely to be developed - usually because the lots are too small or already owned by an established long-term business.

The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

Regards,
[your name]

Planning Commission

From: Mark Yampanis <mark.pub@outlook.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 1:41 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: May 6th Meeting: Corridor Zoning Project
Attachments: PlanningCommissionLetter042826.pdf

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Please see the attached letter.

Planning Commission

From: Pat Schwinn <pschwinn@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 7:15 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Pat Schwinn

pschwinn@earthlink.net

7101 Hemlock Street

Oakland, California 94611

Planning Commission

From: Devin Richards <devin.richards@ucop.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 10:21 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Thank you for your consideration.

Devin Richards
District 2

Devin Richards
devin.richards@ucop.edu
94607
Oakland, California 94607

Planning Commission

From: Kamala Visweswaran <kvisweswaran@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 12:26 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Re: resending Comment on 5-6 Corridor Zoning Update
Attachments: Planning Commission Letter 5-4-26.dotx

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as a Word document. Thank you, KV

On Tue, May 5, 2026 at 9:25 AM Kamala Visweswaran <kvisweswaran@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

Attached please find my comment for inclusion in the supplemental packet for tomorrow's Planning Commission Meeting.

Thank you,
Kamala Visweswaran
713 Peralta Ave
Berkeley, CA

Planning Commission

From: Lin Barron <elbee510@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 12:16 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: College Ave development objection

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Berkeley Planning Commissioners

I strongly object to the dramatic proposal to develop multi-story highrise residential buildings in Elmwood's College Avenue corridor. The project will wall-in a very busy and narrow street, and worse, will increase problems for EMERGENCIES

The Elmwood district on College Avenue is an attractive corridor full of thriving small businesses. Large high-rise buildings in this context are totally out of character and will destroy its ambiance. Unintended negative consequences will be increased noise, trash and vehicle pollution. The character of the district is of a small local neighborhood shopping area - similar to 4th Street and other local commercial districts in Berkeley and Oakland. The charm of the Elmwood district is its welcoming scale for pedestrians, diners and shoppers. ***The continued success of this business district for Berkeley's benefit should be a serious consideration.***

College Avenue is a major choke point in an emergency and will become worse. The Berkeley Fire Station trucks on Russell St at College already have difficulty in getting through College Avenue in emergencies. The street is narrow - a major corridor through south Berkeley - and very congested. It intersects with Ashby Ave, another major thru-corridor and highway out of the city.

South Berkeley residents will be seriously impacted in an emergency evacuation. Another unintended consequence will be ***negative impacts on OAKLAND'S evacuation routes*** as the Rockridge district is a continuation of the College Avenue Elmwood corridor.

Please reconsider plans for such intense development in this long-standing neighborhood shopping corridor.

Sincerely
Lin Barron
Elmwood habitue & former resident of 3023 Hillegass, Berkeley

Planning Commission

From: Zachary Russ <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 12:01 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Corridors: Let's get this done!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

A lot of points have been made, and I thank you for hearing everyone out and bringing thoughtful consideration not just to land use but also how to make effective buildings in that land.

As we examine this case one more time I wanted to reiterate a few things:

- This has been a long time in the making and Berkeley has tons of important questions to answer. Let's get it done.
- The seven story plan is the base case, and the alternative plans complicate these rules, pick winners and losers parcel by parcel, and prevent units from being built. We should be clear about why we are scaling things back, even ahead of the council's consideration.
- Trying to tightly plan things so the housing only barely pencils out is just not a strategy that houses people in volatile times. It leads to stalled projects or a further lack of housing production at a time when major inflationary pressures are already hitting. A new wave of IPO money is already washing over SF, dramatically pushing up home prices and rentals. That wave is hitting Berkeley now, and, absent new supply, they will be bidding against longtime residents and renters for a narrow sliver of housing.
- Berkeley already is facing major budgetary crunches. Voters will decide on a sales tax hike (the most regressive tax type), something that could be offset if we had more fresh infill turnover bringing in property taxes.
- The commercial corridors are key for people who *have* to live near amenities - the mobility impaired, those who can't drive, and people who can't manage a long commute.
- I do think that commercial frontage is important and maintaining it is a priority.

To me the choice is clear: seven stories helps save Berkeley. Let's do it.

Thanks again and have a nice summer!

Zachary Russ

District 1

Zachary Russ

zachary.n.russ@gmail.com

1622 Berkeley Way, Apt 5

Berkeley, California 94703

Planning Commission

From: Sean Kennedy <sean@studiosk.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 11:56 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please approve corridor zoning per staff report

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commission members -

I'm writing to ask you to implement the Corridor Zoning plan **per the staff report**.

The balance as laid out in the staff report addresses housing need, concerns of existing businesses and will add a mixed character to the corridor zones in an organic way over time.

Thank you
Sean Kennedy

Resident +
Co-founder & Principal, Studio Skaggs Kennedy, Architecture + Urbanism

Planning Commission

From: Sue Britson <suebritson@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 11:44 AM
To: Planning Commission; planningpc@berkeley.ca.gov
Subject: Comments on Planning Commission's Upzoning plans along commercial corridors

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To the City of Berkeley Planning Commissioners:

I've read the Planning Commission's proposals to meet the state demands for new housing, and have attended several meetings. Your task is daunting and I applaud your efforts, but there are corrections to be made before finalizing and presenting a final proposal to the City Council.

Communication:

Where was the urban planning exercise that you did for other corridors? You talked to developers, and to residents, but not to businesses. We have lost hundreds of businesses in Berkeley and we can't afford to lose these 'third places' that connect us and provide cohesiveness within this community.

What is motivating you to make such hurried plans that are not well vetted? Take a little more time and listen to people who have done a LOT of research on this matter and have important content to contribute.

Development:

Why did you choose developers for the downtown area that would build tacky cubes and maximize profits for themselves over building integrity that we have had throughout so much of Berkeley's development? Where are the intelligent design principles that a beautiful, thriving city needs?

You say of the mixed-use opportunity areas: "*This approach reflects the direction of Planning Commission to target additional development capacity on sites with the greatest redevelopment potential, while maintaining the existing scale and character of the broader corridors.*" You are NOT maintaining the existing scale and character in any sense of the word. There needs to be a fixed ratio of height to corridor width with stepbacks that will maintain light and proportion. We don't want to look like Oakland's Valdez Street with 3 blocks of 7 story apartments. And we see many First floors in new housing developments that are vacant. We need more guardrails on these developers -- their motive is purely profit.

Lack of parking – not every senior, not every family of small children, not every disabled resident can bike, use public transit, or afford Lyft and Uber rides – you must provide a modicum of parking – the corridors, esp College Ave area, cannot absorb the population increase without more parking

Irreversible Changes to the City of Berkeley:

We must protect Berkeley businesses. They are a lifeline of this unique community.

Fair housing goals – what is fair housing that has eliminated low income units and will become market rate throughout? I think we all know in the end there will be no middle housing, one of Berkeley's biggest issues.

Homeowners' insurance policies in Berkeley are being cancelled because Berkeley is too densely built. Do you care about us, about homeowners in Berkeley, who are now less than half the residents here, who pay the highest property taxes in the region while you make decisions that benefit the developers, the banks, and the realtors? Where is Berkeley's inclusive democracy in that?

Berkeley is frequently cited as the second or third most dense city in the Bay Area, following San Francisco. Ten and 20 years down the line, you don't want to look at Berkeley and see just another built up Bay Area city that has lost its light, its trees, and its views of the hills and the bay that were in the minds of Berkeley's founders? Think about what you will have at the end of all this.

I was once a Cal student, lived in Berkeley for 30 years, then Richmond for 25, and now I'm back in Berkeley. In 1981 I founded Step One School in north Berkeley, which has supported over 2000 Berkeley families to flourish, and I love this City and I don't want to see it destroyed in this process.

Thank you for your work and for taking into account this feedback.

Sincerely,

Sue Britson
Berkeley resident

Planning Commission

From: Debra Sanderson <debsanderson51@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 11:38 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Corridors' Project

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to support the staff recommendation on the Corridor's Project and to suggest a change in the methodology for calculating base height.

I strongly support option 1A (map based approach) to identify Mixed Use Opportunity Sites. It more realistically reflects the sites that are likely to be developed and provides more certainty to property owners and business managers in the area. It is an approach that works well in a small city such as ours where the planning areas are small.

I recommend a change in the method for calculating base height for mixed use opportunity sites. I generally support using street width to determine the base height, but with the State's Density Program the base height becomes a fiction. It is merely an arithmetic method to calculate the real height of the building. A better approach would be to set base height so that the Density Bonus project would represent a significant height increase over the existing structures without being significantly taller than these structures. Given that most of the buildings in the Elmwood are only 1 story, and the current FAR prevents them from ever becoming taller, a 3-story base height would result in a 4.5 to 5 story project with Density Bonus, which would still be significantly taller than the existing structures in the Elmwood. A height of 4-5 stories is a reasonable increase and would be much more acceptable to the Elmwood neighbors.

Thank you for your consideration,
Debbie Sanderson

--

Debra R. Sanderson
Member, Casita Coalition
Co-chair, ADU Task Force
debsanderson51@gmail.com
510-812-8781

Planning Commission

From: Matthew Zirbel <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 11:38 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to ask you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

In its simplest form - housing is the primary lever we have in creating enough housing for our residents, for reducing homelessness, and for creating a city in which public transit can make sense to run. And for those purposes, more housing being zoned means Berkeley can get the housing it urgently needs.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers

will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Matthew Zirbel
District 3

Matthew Zirbel
matthew.d.zirbel@gmail.com

2330 Parker
Berkeley, California 94704

Planning Commission

From: Libby Lee-Egan <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 11:33 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Thank you for your consideration.

Libby Lee-Egan
District 1

Libby Lee-Egan
libbyco@gmail.com
1130 HOPKINS ST
BERKELEY, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Brianna Morales <brianna@housingactioncoalition.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 11:23 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: HAC Letter re: Planning Commission Item 10A
Attachments: HAC Letter re_ Corridors Zoning Update.pdf

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

Please find attached the Housing Action Coalition's (HAC) letter regarding Item 10A on tomorrow tonight's Planning Commission agenda. HAC is a member-supported nonprofit advocacy organization that works across California to advance housing at all income levels in order to alleviate our state's housing crisis. Our members represent the building industry, including builders both market-rate and affordable.

We urge the Planning Commission to recommend adoption of the Corridors Zoning Update tonight and to do so with the seven-story, full-corridor alternative rather than the staff-recommended opportunity sites approach.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need anything further.

--

In support,

Brianna Morales | Pronouns: She/Her

Political Organizing & Programs Manager | Housing Action Coalition
555 Montgomery St, San Francisco, CA 94111
Cell: (619) 535-6182 | Email: brianna@housingactioncoalition.org



To opt out of all HAC emails, respond to this email with "unsubscribe all".

Planning Commission

From: Rowyn McDonald <rowynm@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 11:18 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Corridors zoning update

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Berkeley Planning Commission,

I live in Albany, a block north of the Berkeley border and less than 2 blocks from Solano Ave, and I am writing to let you know that I support upzoning for more housing on Solano Ave (and College Ave and North Shattuck).

I grew up in the East Bay, attending events like the Solano Stroll when I was a kid. Many of my friends now struggle to afford living in the area, much less owning a home. I love where I live, and I want more people to be able to live in such a walkable, bikable, lively district.

I am glad to see that small business retention and anti-displacement is part of the planning, as it would be a shame to lose local stores like Pegasus Books or Zachary's Pizza.

Thank you,
Rowyn McDonald
Albany, 94706

Planning Commission

From: Andrea Horbinski <andrea.horbinski@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 11:06 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

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I'm writing to ask you to implement the Corridor Zoning plan without restriction to certain parcels.

The Corridor Zoning is, more than anything else, a step towards fair housing across the city - addressing the legacy of restrictive zoning that kept certain people from living in our most highly resourced neighborhoods.

The current proposal to implement zoning only for certain 'mixed use opportunity areas', i.e., specific parcels in each area, is unlike anything that was done for other areas in Berkeley. Doing so would reinforce the history of privilege and exclusion that Corridor Zoning is intended to lessen and run contrary to Council's original direction. It also breaks the goals in the Housing Element of 'achieving consistency among all transit and commercial corridors, especially between formerly red-lined areas and higher-resource areas'.

This proposal is also unnecessary. I understand the concerns regarding preserving our historic businesses. But the City staff's excellent analysis shows that few sites in each district are likely to be developed - usually because the lots are too small or already owned by an established long-term business.

The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

Regards,

Andrea Horbinski, PhD

- [Get your copy of *Manga's First Century: How Creators and Fans Made Japanese Comics, 1905-1989*](#)

- <https://linktr.ee/ahorbinski>

Planning Commission

From: David Mendelsohn <dwmendelsohn@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 10:59 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commission members -

I'm writing to ask you to implement the Corridor Zoning plan without restriction to certain parcels.

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The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

Regards,
David Mendelsohn
District 3

Planning Commission

From: Debra Sanderson <debsanderson51@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 10:48 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Corridors' project

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to encourage the Planning Commission to support the staff recommendation on the Corridor's Project (Item 10A) with a few qualifiers:

--

Debra R. Sanderson
Member, Casita Coalition
Co-chair, ADU Task Force
debsanderson51@gmail.com
510-812-8781

Planning Commission

From: Marc Hedlund <marc@precipice.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 10:30 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Comments on College Ave upzoning

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I am a resident of District 8, the Elmwood area, and I live in a single-family home here. I strongly support upzoning across Berkeley, including along College Avenue. Please work to create more housing across Berkeley and to ensure that all areas of the city, including mine, contribute significantly to this goal.

I feel lucky to be able to live in Berkeley and to have a home here. However, if I were to use my residency here to preclude others from coming to Berkeley and enjoying what it has to offer, that would be a furtherance of our neighborhood's history of racism and exclusion. Neither my wife nor I would have been allowed to purchase our home under the restrictions of its deed when it was built. I am glad that has changed, but much more change is needed. I do not want to "pull up the ladder behind me"; instead, I want to see a mix of housing in our neighborhood and across the city.

Lack of housing is a huge problem across California, and across the Bay Area, and across Berkeley, and we all have to do our part to address it. I am very supportive of Berkeley's government creating change in this area but it needs to be spread across the whole city. I look forward to having more neighbors and more kinds of neighbors; to local shops having many more customers; to public transit allowing many more people to travel quickly and easily; and to our neighborhood doing its part.

-Marc Hedlund

Planning Commission

From: sam hilkey <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 10:19 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sam Hilkey

sam hilkey

samhilkey@gmail.com

1157 61st street

Oakland, California 94608

Planning Commission

From: Ani Mukerji <ani.mukerji@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 10:02 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commission members -

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Regards,
Ani Mukerji
Thousand Oaks Resident

Planning Commission

From: Becca Schonberg <becca.schonberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 9:32 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

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The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

Regards,
Becca Schonberg
2416 Stuart St.

Planning Commission

From: Carol Gross <cgrossucsf@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 9:30 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

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Dear Planning Commission members -

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The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

I believe this is a HUGE issue for Berkeley--the NIMBY movement originated here--let's end it here right now.

Best,
Carol A. Gross
1700 Jaynes St
Berkeley, CA 94703

Planning Commission

From: Michael Katz <mqkatz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 9:29 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Corridors Zoning: Spare essential drug and grocery stores

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

At least one Councilmember has expressed interest in cutting this initiative back to a limited **zoning overlay** that would protect vital existing businesses that are needed to serve new as well as existing residents. As a resident of a high-density building at the north end of North Shattuck, I'd like to suggest some specific elements of a net-positive North Shattuck overlay that would minimize detriments.

As someone who shops and dines out only on foot and by bicycle, I'm probably a good proxy for the residents of new housing, which is likely to be built with minimal or no parking. And my comments here apply also to the Solano and Elmwood target zones.

1. Leave drugstores and grocery stores alone (with an asterisk)

AI needs only electricity and water, but humans need to eat, and care for our bodies. (I got this from ChatGPT.) The more residents that the city welcomes, the greater the need for businesses that meet our basic needs.

The CVS store at 1451 Shattuck is a red prime target on maps within the deeply flawed Raimi + Associates Corridors Alternatives Report. **This site should be excluded entirely from any new zoning incentives.**

We've lost three full-service drugstores on Shattuck between Cedar and Bancroft Way in recent years (one CVS, two Walgreens). Removing the 1451 Shattuck store would create a Drugstore Desert across most of central Berkeley. Drugstores with extended hours, offering a wide range of medical and other merchandise, are exactly what a densely populated neighborhood needs. The store is already very widely patronized, as you can verify from its long checkout lines and full parking lot.

The Andronico's at 1550 Shattuck, the Andronico's at 1850 Solano, and the Safeway at 1400 Shattuck, should also be excluded from rezoning for the same reasons: basic needs, diverse merchandise, and extended hours. All these stores are at capacity, and are chronically understaffed (Again, check the checkout lines.) Losing even one would be a disaster.

We've just learned that the Trader Joe's on College is targeted for removal. If you'll forgive me for assuming that you high officials do your own shopping – look at the crazy long lines at the remaining Trader Joe's on University. Would any sane City policy leave this as the only alternative shopping location for people who formerly depended on four closed grocery stores?

Here's the asterisk: The Safeway at 1400 Shattuck has a long surface parking lot, as well as some underground parking. There might be a reasonable opportunity to build housing above (commercial) parking at the north end of the surface lot, while leaving enough overall parking for the store to function.

2. Prioritize the derelict BofA building and lot at 1516–1536 Shattuck

Notoriously, this former Bank of America building has sat vacant for years. Inexplicably, the parking lot has been roped off just as long. That's a sad loss of use for a commercial district that has converted many parking spaces to dining space – and a bizarre loss of income for the property's lazy owner.

The lot is now being used as storage for food-store furniture. Build, baby, build on this blighted site.

3. Target the empty Books Inc./Coldwell Banker Realty building at 1491/1495 Shattuck

No one was happy to see the bookstore gone, but the realty office has relocated. Building housing on this site would deny the neighborhood nothing.

4. Consider the BMO office and parking lot at 1480 Shattuck

This site is already on the consultants' target list. Living two blocks away, I have mixed feelings about losing the bank branch, even though I don't bank there. That's only because I grew up two blocks from an actual Bank of Montreal branch in Montreal. It would be inconvenient to lose North Shattuck's last bank branch, but there are ATMs.

5. Consider Benchmark Climbing and (especially) its parking lot at 1607 Shattuck

Recreation and exercise sites are important. But this former Walgreens (earlier, Elephant) drugstore site seems part of the trend where every failed large retail space turns into a fitness gym.

I suspect that the retailpocalypse would soon offer this gym places to relocate.

Bar Method took over whatever used to be at 2095 Rose #102, and TNT Strength is opening in the former vitamin-store site at 1400 Shattuck #3.

6. Remove every other "opportunity site" from your proposal

Established neighborhood-serving businesses, of any scale, are not "opportunity sites." They are targets for misguided abandonment of prudent zoning obligations, whose destruction would leave the targeted areas much less livable for the new residents whose arrival this initiative is intended to welcome.

0. Reconsider the whole thing

I work with engineers, so my lists are really supposed to start at 0. In a better world, I hope the Commission would reject this whole upzoning proposal as counterproductive to housing affordability.

Berkeley's efforts to spur lots of new housing have largely backfired – producing not the vibrant urban community we were promised (nor the flying cars!), but instead a vacant downtown ghost town.

The residential buildings that private developers can actually finance and build are 6 stories high. Developers can achieve that height under current zoning by including a sprinkling of affordable units.

Most likely, the proposed corridors upzoning would simply give for-profit developers the same 6-story approvals for free – removing any incentive to provide affordable units. Because 6 stories will remain what developers can realistically finance for the foreseeable future, the public would get less, not more, affordable housing.

Would it be crazy to take short-term affordable housing seriously? Would it be crazy for the City to acquire one of the smaller vacant properties, and negotiate a largely-affordable project from a position of strength? I'm just asking.

Thank you for considering these suggestions. To end on a suitably humble note: Like many Berkeley residents more capable than myself, I can be planner for free – and can easily do a better job than the consultants on whom the City keeps wasting its underwater budget.

Remember: Buildings need people. People need food and other essential supplies. Don't wreck what essential, but endangered, retail infrastructure is still standing.

Respectfully yours,
Michael Katz
Berkeley 94709

Planning Commission

From: Kamala Visweswaran <kvisweswaran@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 9:26 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Comment on 5-6 Corridor Zoning Update
Attachments: Planning Commission Letter 5-4-26.odt

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

Attached please find my comment for inclusion in the supplemental packet for tomorrow's Planning Commission Meeting.

Thank you,
Kamala Visweswaran
713 Peralta Ave
Berkeley, CA

Planning Commission

From: Nick Pilch <nicky@mindspring.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 9:08 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: North Shattuck, College, and Solano deserve dense housing. Please allow seven stories base zoning

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am a former Albany Mayor, Albany Planning & Zoning Commissioner, and proponent of building desperately needed housing. Solano is a wonderful avenue with two grocery stores, good public transit and much more that should be shared by more people. Your example of upzoning upper Solano will help spur the much needed up-zoning of lower Solano.

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment.

There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nick Pilch

Former Albany Mayor, Albany Planning & Zoning Commissioner

Nick Pilch

nicky@mindspring.com

634 San Carlos Avenue

Albany, California 94706

Planning Commission

From: Megan Wachspress <megan.wachspress@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 8:45 AM
To: Planning Commission
Cc: Kesarwani, Rashi
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commission members -

Please implement the Corridor Zoning plan without caving to special pleading from wealthier neighborhoods.

The Corridor Zoning is, more than anything else, a step towards fair housing across the city - addressing the legacy of redlining that kept certain people from living in those neighborhoods with greatest access to transit and thriving commercial districts.

The current proposal to implement zoning only for certain 'mixed use opportunity areas', i.e., specific parcels in each area, is unlike anything that was done for other areas in Berkeley. Limiting construction of new, denser housing in the richest, whitest areas in Berkeley reinforces the history of privilege and exclusion that Corridor Zoning is intended to lessen and runs contrary to Council's original direction. It also breaks the goals in the Housing Element of 'achieving consistency among all transit and commercial corridors, especially between formerly red-lined areas and higher-resource areas'.

This proposal is also unnecessary. I understand the concerns regarding preserving our historic businesses. But as a *frequent* Cheeseboard customer I am far more likely to be deterred from eating there by their opposition to more housing than the addition of new neighbors on that (underutilized) block of Shattuck.

The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

Thank you so much for your consideration, and all best,
Megan Wachspress
District 1 (Grant and Virginia)

Planning Commission

From: Donna Graves <donnagraves01@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 12:21 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Members of the Planning Commission,

I'm writing to ask you to implement the Corridor Zoning plan without restriction to certain parcels.

The Corridor Zoning is, in addition to a crucial way to bring more needed housing to Berkeley,, a step towards fair housing across the city - addressing the legacy of restrictive zoning that kept certain people from living in our most highly resourced neighborhoods.

The current proposal to implement zoning only for certain 'mixed use opportunity areas', i.e., specific parcels in each area, is unlike anything that was done for other areas in Berkeley. Doing so would reinforce the history of privilege and exclusion that Corridor Zoning is intended to lessen and run contrary to Council's original direction. It also breaks the goals in the Housing Element of 'achieving consistency among all transit and commercial corridors, especially between formerly red-lined areas and higher-resource areas'.

This proposal is also unnecessary. I understand the concerns regarding preserving our historic businesses. But the City staff's excellent analysis shows that few sites in each district are likely to be developed - usually because the lots are too small or already owned by an established long-term business. And Berkeley can explore other strategies for supporting and maintaining our historic businesses, which are very important.

The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

Best regards,

Donna Graves

Sent from my iPad

Planning Commission

From: Daniel Leaverton <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 10:21 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

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I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Daniel Leaverton
daniel.leaverton@gmail.com
1910 Sacramento st
Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: MAXWELL DAVIS <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:48 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

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I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

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Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

MAXWELL DAVIS

maxwellwdavis@gmail.com

429 Staten Ave, Apt 5

Oakland, California 94610-4972

Planning Commission

From: Caephren McKenna <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:21 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

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Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Caephren McKenna

caephren@gmail.com

392 44th St

Oakland, California 94609-2225

Planning Commission

From: Lee Bishop <bishoplm@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 8:52 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Implement Corridor Zoning Equally Across All Neighborhoods

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission Members,

I am writing to urge the implementation of the Corridor Zoning plan without restrictions or parcel exclusions.

Treating wealthier, historically white neighborhoods differently from formerly redlined areas is deeply inequitable. This unequal application preserves the very legacy of exclusion we are trying to dismantle, and we cannot let systemic privilege dictate our city's zoning policies.

The Housing Element explicitly calls for consistency across all corridors, and staff analysis shows that fears about widespread redevelopment of historic businesses are unfounded. To truly achieve fair housing, I urge you to apply the street width-based zoning equally across all districts without exceptions.

Sincerely,
Lee Bishop
District 1

Planning Commission

From: Amber Richardson <richardson.amber@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 8:51 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commission members -

I'm writing to ask you to implement the Corridor Zoning plan without restriction to certain parcels.

The Corridor Zoning is, more than anything else, a step towards fair housing across the city - addressing the legacy of restrictive zoning that kept certain people from living in our most highly resourced neighborhoods.

The current proposal to implement zoning only for certain 'mixed use opportunity areas', i.e., specific parcels in each area, is unlike anything that was done for other areas in Berkeley. Doing so would reinforce the history of privilege and exclusion that Corridor Zoning is intended to lessen and run contrary to Council's original direction. It also breaks the goals in the Housing Element of 'achieving consistency among all transit and commercial corridors, especially between formerly red-lined areas and higher-resource areas'.

This proposal is also unnecessary. I understand the concerns regarding preserving our historic businesses. But the City staff's excellent analysis shows that few sites in each district are likely to be developed - usually because the lots are too small or already owned by an established long-term business.

The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

Regards,
Amber Richardson

Planning Commission

From: Christopher Hudson <chris@hudsonmcdonald.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 8:06 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Pass the corridor plan as proposed by staff

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commission members - I'm writing to ask you to implement the Corridor Zoning plan as proposed and restricted to certain parcels that are most likely to yield significant housing.

Thank you

Chris Hudson
Hudson McDonald

Sent from mobile device

Planning Commission

From: Molly Miller <mollykbmiller@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 8:03 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: More housing in the commercial corridors

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Planning Commission,

I'm a Berkeley resident writing in support of allowing more housing in the Solano, North Shattuck, and College Ave commercial corridors. These are areas with great resources including proximity to transit, and the city should give more people the opportunity to access those resources. Upzoning should be implemented throughout the corridors, and not just in a few specific sites. Please consider the needs of the people throughout our region who want to live here, as well as the students who want to stay here, but can't because there isn't enough housing. Please do what you can to make Berkeley a realistic option for more people, and not just the lucky few.

Thank you for your work on this matter.

Kind regards,
Molly Miller

Planning Commission

From: Kim Winkleman <kim.winkleman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 7:20 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Treat all Commercial areas fairly!

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Planning Commission members -

I'm writing to ask you to implement the Corridor Zoning plan without restriction to certain parcels.

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The current proposal to implement zoning only for certain 'mixed use opportunity areas'—specific parcels in each area—is unlike anything done for other areas in Berkeley. Doing so would reinforce the history of privilege and exclusion that Corridor Zoning intends to lessen and would run contrary to Council's original direction. It also breaks the goals in the Housing Element of 'achieving consistency among all transit and commercial corridors, especially between formerly red-lined areas and higher-resource areas'.

This proposal is also unnecessary. I understand the concerns regarding preserving our historic businesses. But the City staff's excellent analysis shows that few sites in each district are likely to be developed - usually because the lots are too small or already owned by an established long-term business.

The fair and appropriate proposal would be to apply the street width-based zoning (as shown on Table 2 of this week's staff report) equally in each district. I urge you to implement that promptly for Council's consideration and approval.

Regards,
Kimberly Winkleman
1636 9th St., Berkeley

Planning Commission

From: Hannah Pitt <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 3:34 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am a homeowner in Berkeley and I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

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I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley

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On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

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Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Hannah Pitt

hannahp24@gmail.com

3236 King Street

Berkeley, California 94703

Planning Commission

From: Tawny Reynolds <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 2:48 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

As a car-free Berkeley resident, I use public transit extensively. I want more people to be able to live near public transit affordably, so they also have the opportunity to live a car-free life if they desire, and avoid adding more traffic to our city and long commutes for the workers who keep Berkeley running.

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

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Thank you for your consideration,

- Tawny Reynolds

District 1, Berkeley

Tawny Reynolds

tawnyann@gmail.com

1421 Hearst Ave

Berkeley , California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Karina Mudd <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 1:32 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Karina Mudd

karinamudd@gmail.com

2118 McKinley Ave

Berkeley, California 94703

Planning Commission

From: Csilla Kenny <toth.csilla97@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 1:30 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Corridors Zoning Comments

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commissioners:

I'm a resident and homeowner in District 5 off of Solano. I've lived in Berkeley or Albany my entire life. Currently I'm raising two young boys who attend Thousand Oaks School. I've been following the upzoning process with cautious optimism. I love this town and I want more people to have the opportunity to live here. I love living near Solano Avenue and having easy access to the charming shops and restaurants. However my husband and I frequently envy the liveliness of lower Solano. There is just a lot more going on along the blocks in Albany. I think I know why: there are more apartments, more families, and just generally more residents in the area. The housing density along and adjacent to Solano Avenue is higher. I would love to have more apartments and residents along Upper Solano.

I also believe that zoning is an imperfect tool to shape the form of a city, but it's one of the only tools we have as a municipality. In the best case scenario zoning should enable liveable cities rather than impose endless restrictions on creativity, growth, and progress. To that end I think zoning along all the parcels in the study area should be the same. It just doesn't make sense to cherry pick specific parcels and have different rules for each parcel. That's not how zoning is supposed to work.

I'm not as familiar with the other areas being considered, but I've lived in South Berkeley before. I think all the three commercial areas should be considered the same and the height limits should be the same across the city. We shouldn't continue to perpetuate the legacy of redlining across the city.

I hope you will make a decision about zoning from a perspective of hope for the future instead of fear of change.

Csilla Kenny

Pronunciation: Chee-lah

| [510.367.2112](tel:510.367.2112)
| Toth.Csilla97@gmail.com

Planning Commission

From: Alfredo Rivera <jalfredo_rivera@berkeley.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 1:10 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

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The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alfredo Rivera

Alfredo Rivera

jalfredo_rivera@berkeley.edu

2118 McKinley Ave

Berkeley, California 94703

Planning Commission

From: Kate Stillwell <stillwellkate@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 12:33 PM
To: Planning Commission
Cc: Humbert, Mark
Subject: Please support tailored zoning for the Corridors Zoning Update

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing as a 19-year Berkeley resident, homeowner, and parent of 2 BHS students. I choose to live in Berkeley because of our community's values of fairness, inclusion, and diversity, which are likewise reflected in our City's leadership.

I am in strong favor, and I encourage the Commission's support, of the Corridors Zoning Update as proposed by Councilmember Humbert, specifically allowing for potential future housing projects on the identified opportunity sites.

Housing is the lifeblood of Berkeley, and we have a civic responsibility to reconcile the decades of policy that created housing barriers, undermining our community values. The vocal group opposing the CZU represents a minority of residents. In contrast, a majority of residents like myself, with full-time jobs, families in school, and caregiving responsibilities, cannot afford the time required to advocate and come to meetings. Based on conversations with such friends and neighbors, I am confident that I speak for many of these "silent majority" who support continued investment by our City in housing, particularly in D8 and the Elmwood where residency would otherwise be out of reach for essential members of our community.

As a resident of District 8, Councilmember Humbert prepared the following draft of a letter from constituents, to easily send our support to you.

Even though it is pre-written, I stand by Mark's words as my own.

—

I am writing to you to urge your support for the tailored zoning approach championed by Councilmember Humbert. Limiting rezoning to the sites with the greatest level of housing opportunity will ease displacement pressures on existing businesses, while serving to maintain projected capacity for new housing.

Extended vacancies as a result of stalled development projects are a real concern, as evidenced by the boarded-up block of Center Street between Oxford and Shattuck Avenue, as well as the vacant pit behind the Shattuck Hotel. An incremental approach focused on sites that do not feature vibrant, pedestrian-oriented retail would help guard against such outcomes, especially at a time of such economic volatility.

Councilmember Humbert's compromise could be a win-win: protecting merchants and retail vitality while still meeting current targets for creating new homes. In the Elmwood especially, targeting the

rezoning to the sites with the highest opportunity for new homes (as previously identified by the project team) will have little to no effect on the projected housing capacity of that corridor.

Thank you to Planning Commission members, staff, and the rest of the project team for their openness and dedication throughout this process.

Respectfully,
Katherine ("Kate") Stillwell
115 El Camino Real
Berkeley CA 94705

mobile 650-303-7906

Planning Commission

From: kelly hammargren <kellyhammargren@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 11:57 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Planning Commission May 6, 2026 meeting

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On the surface the proposed recommendations for the May 6, 2026 Planning Commission look to be the best possible outcome of the direction to revise zoning by restricting up-zoning to a limited number of parcels described as opportunity sites to minimize the impact on businesses. It is a mix of shops, restaurants and specialty businesses that make each of the corridors walkable, special and keep neighboring residents out of their cars.

There is still work to be done!

These are the points that still need consideration:

- The construction sweet spot of building height is around 7-stories. These are the projects that are moving forward.
 - If the goal of adding housing to high resource neighborhoods is to create opportunities for lower income households to live in the area then zoning needs to be planned to encourage use of the state density bonus with inclusionary affordable units.
 - A 35-foot height limit gets the project to the construction sweet spot with the state 100% density bonus requiring the inclusion of affordable housing.
 - The 100% bonus is usually 15% very low income and 15% moderate income with an in lieu fee for the missing 10% low-income units required by city ordinance.
- The larger parcel opportunity sites are also anchor stores that stabilize and draw business to the district.
 - The grocery store for Solano is the only full-service grocery for the neighborhood. Loss of this store requires traveling further distances.
 - A gas station is of less impact as if people are filling their cars with gas they are obviously already driving somewhere with many other choices.
- Objective Design Standards need to be solid for not just the exterior, but also ensuring functional commercial space.
- Replacing an anchor grocery store like a Safeway with mixed-use housing project that is designed with only enough commercial space left for a coffee shop upends the entire commercial ecosystem.
- The suggestions for mitigation for small businesses thus far from the consultants at the February 4, 2026 meeting were wholly inadequate as you heard from small business owners who spoke during public comment at the meeting.
 - As was learned the consultant from Strategic Economics based recommendations on input from the property owners and developers.
 - A unfiltered presentation from the small independent business owners directly is sorely needed.

Thank you for the progress that you have made. There is still work to do. Please take the time to make the best recommendations and not fall to it must be made in one night.

Kelly hammargren
Berkeley Resident

Planning Commission

From: David Shere <sheredlk@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 11:15 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Corridor Upzoning

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commission,

I am excited to see the Corridor Zoning Update on your agenda for this week. I am writing with four points.

I urge you to recommend Option 1B - Criteria-Based Sites.

The decisions that we make in the next few months are going to shape these neighborhoods for the next 30 or 40 years. We don't know what the businesses and what the neighborhoods will look like even ten years from now, much less 30 or 40. A criteria-based approach provides the flexibility for our zoning to develop with the neighborhoods, rather than imposing today's status quo on the future.

And that really is what this whole thing is about - do we accept the status quo of today as the best that we can do? Do we accept that some wealthy and exclusive neighborhoods are simply too quaint to do their fair share? Or do we understand that the status quo is inadequate and unjust, and take the bold action that is needed to build the kind of neighborhoods and kind of city that we can all be proud of, that aligns with our values?

Berkeley should follow the Adeline precedent and expand the zones into the adjacent residential parcels

I was excited and grateful to see staff's new recommendation that certain portions of R1 and R2 zones that abut the existing commercial zones be incorporated into this plan.

I have complete confidence in the policy process followed by planning staff and I'm sure that the original decision to limit the update to the existing zones was well grounded. That said, I believe with hindsight that limiting the update in this way was a mistake that severely curtailed the ambitions of what this process could achieve. I am excited to see that staff has begun rolling back that decision by including certain residential zoned parking lots into the relevant commercial zones.

I will note however that while this is an improvement, it still does not align the CZU process with the Adeline corridor process, which re-zoned not only parking lots but adjacent parcels with existing residential uses. I must ask once again why we would treat the high-resource, exclusionary neighborhoods differently from Adeline and South Berkeley?

I therefore urge the planning commission to include in its recommendation that adjacent parcels be included into the commercial zones throughout the zones, so that over the coming decades we may see these parcels redeveloped into higher-intensity uses, providing more Berkeleyans with the opportunities

afforded by the high-resource neighborhoods. We could include provisions regarding owner-occupancy and tenancy history if there are concerns about displacement in the now-residential zones.

Increased height limits do not equate to fewer onsite affordable units. This is a misunderstanding of why the density bonus will be used.

The advocates of Exclusionary Elmwood have argued that a maximum seven story base zoning means that new buildings will not include onsite units because they won't need to rely on the state density bonus. This is false. The state density bonus is a bonus in *units* not a bonus in *height*. Whatever maximum density is set, if a developer wants to build more units they will need a density bonus and thus will need to include on-site affordable units. Even if a developer doesn't want more units, they will want to waive the setbacks and the stepbacks and the many other development standards that reduce the number of units that fit on a parcel. Further, they will use a density bonus to earn concessions on expensive regulations like Bird Safe Glass and other local rules that drive up the cost of housing *for everybody*.

Again, there is little to no connection between the height limits that the city establishes in the base zoning and the inclusion of onsite units. Any argument resting on this fallacy is invalid.

Remember that you are making decisions for the whole community, not just the loudest voices in the room

I would love to be there on Wednesday in person to make these remarks directly to you, but I have a 20 month old and a 4 and a half year old, and I will need to be home taking care of them.

I'm sure that you will notice that the attendees at Wednesday's meeting, if it is well-attended, do not represent a demographic cross-section of the city. They represent people with the fewest obligations on their time. Nobody with childcare obligations or work obligations will be in attendance, and that is a shame because both you and the speakers will have a highly skewed idea of what the broader community wants to see.

I urge you to keep in mind the voices that aren't in the room, and the people who don't even know that this process is happening. Remember that many of the people affected by the decisions you will make don't even live in Berkeley today - many of them haven't even been born yet.

Again, I urge the planning commission to recommend Option 1B and to recommend expansion of the commercial zones into the adjacent residential parcels.

Thank you for your time, your attention, and your service to the community.

Sincerely,
David Shere

Planning Commission

From: Joe Wadcan <joe@wadcan.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 10:56 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: 7 stories is a GOOD thing, please read

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the BPC,

As a resident of District 8 in Berkeley, I support the 7 story CZU update. Our neighborhood can certainly absorb that height (and likely more), and it would IMPROVE the number of people and vibrancy of our community.

There's so much noise from a very small subset of residents who want nothing to change, but the reality is we need more housing and Berkeley should be open to developers who WANT to build here.

I teach at UC Berkeley and I'm continually saddened by students who tell me they have to leave Berkeley because it's too expensive to live here. Berkeley was recently cited as the WORST place for housing in the Bay, because the housing stock is so precious. Let's change that.

No project will be 100% perfect, but this is a good project where the positives drastically outweigh potential risks. Please don't let Berkeley become one big retirement community. More supply means more people of all income levels, are able to join our neighborhood. That's a good thing and something we desperately need.

I'm sad to see the efforts to cherry pick sites, as it's just making it harder for future development. Retailers can't exist unless there's a strong density of people there. By limiting that density, you're killing the long term viability of commercial corridors.

Please push back on the cherry picking and do what's right for all of Berkeley to remain attractive and liveable. That means a 7 story base zoning for commercial areas.

I have two toddlers. I want to eventually live here in Berkeley too. Our neighborhood will certainly adapt, like it has many times before. But let's adapt in the right direction, with more people and clearer zoning being a signal that Berkeley cares about long term livability, not just a few residents feelings of nostalgia.

Joe Wadcan
District 8

Joe Wadcan
joe@wadcan.com
24 Eucalyptus Road
Berkeley, California 94705

Planning Commission

From: Isaac Serratos <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 10:25 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Isaac Serratos

Isaac Serratos

isaacserratos2@gmail.com

37 8th Ave, Unit 204

Oakland, California 94606

Planning Commission

From: Kevin Griffin <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 10:00 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: More housing on Solano!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I deleted the pre-written letter because I want you to know that this is a real letter. I live three blocks north of Solano, and I have a hard time understanding why small businesses don't want more customers. Our neighborhood is geriatric. I myself am 76 years old, though I can still walk to Solano. What this neighborhood needs is an infusion of families and young people. Given the housing prices in this neighborhood, that's never going to happen unless we build up! Personally I would prefer tall buildings to be on the north side of Solano because the street would stay more sunny. But even that is so selfish that I'd never fight for it. The city, the state, and indeed our whole country need housing! Please do the right thing and get this done.

Thank you,
Kevin Griffin
789 Vincente Ave.

Kevin Griffin
kevggriffin23@gmail.com
789 Vincente Ave
Berkeley, California 94707-1830

Planning Commission

From: Allison Bakke <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:55 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Allison Bakke

allison.bakke@gmail.com

2407 Telegraph Avenue, 507

Oakland, California 94612

Planning Commission

From: Joe DiStefano <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:55 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please follow through on base zoning across North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

I live just above the top of Solano Ave and have watched as the once vibrant commercial corridor has degraded to a poorly utilized and frankly boring place to go. All of the exciting shops and restaurants have moved to Albany. I used to go to the top of Solano multiple times a week, as it is a 5 minute walk from my house. Now I go there 1-2 times per month to get a few last minute items from Andronicos.

The district is in desperate need of an infusion of energy and more housing and people within walking distance is just the right remedy. I understand that construction can be disruptive and I understand that new development of multiple stories could impact the character of my neighborhood. But these are realities we must endure to improve our city, make its greatest neighborhoods more accessible, and inject desperately needed energy in our sleepy commercial corridors.

Thank you,
Joe DiStefano
District 5

Joe DiStefano
joedweb@gmail.com
1972 Los Angeles Ave
Berkeley, California 94707

Planning Commission

From: Stephen Lezak <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:43 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I live on Walnut St, right behind Chez Panisse. I'm an enthusiastic YES! to upzoning. Seven stories? Too tall for my taste. (Note that Montreal has fabulous density and limits to about three stories.)

But please let's build more housing in our beautiful neighborhood! I want more neighbors, more shops and restaurants, more apartments built to energy-efficient standards, etc.

We can do better!

-Stephen

Stephen Lezak
stephen.lezak@gmail.com
1524 walnut st
berkeley, California 94709

Planning Commission

From: Jeremiah Maller <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:42 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Support Full Seven-Story Zoning on North Shattuck, Solano, and College

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delay.

The voters elected a pro-housing Council, and Council direction was clear: staff was asked to study seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same basic standard Berkeley is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

The draft ordinance before you falls short of that direction. It proposes as few as four stories in some places and limits meaningful upzoning to a handful of handpicked “opportunity sites,” rather than applying it across the full corridors. It also adds new property classifications, further complicating Berkeley’s zoning patchwork and effectively picking winners and losers parcel by parcel. The Commission should push back and send Council a recommendation that reflects the direction it gave.

This process has already taken more than two years and is part of Berkeley’s Housing Element commitments. The city has held workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reviews, and Council briefings. The analysis has been done. More delay will not resolve entrenched opposition; it will only delay urgently needed homes and prolong Berkeley’s failure to meet its housing commitments to the state.

Some have argued that seven-story zoning could reduce affordable housing production by weakening the incentive to use the state density bonus. But that argument ignores the reality of housing development: projects already operate on thin margins, and further restricting

project size will make more projects infeasible. Reducing zoned capacity is not a path to more subsidized housing. It is a path to less housing of every kind.

These corridors are also neighborhood retail districts. Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit, not seas of parking lots. Adding homes above and near these corridors means more neighbors supporting local businesses like Zachary's, Cheeseboard, and the Elmwood Café. More residents on the corridor will strengthen, not weaken, these commercial districts.

Finally, this is a fair housing issue. These are among Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods, with strong schools, safer streets, good air quality, transit access, parks, and amenities. These are precisely the places California's fair housing laws are meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed lower-income and disadvantaged residents toward the freeway or out of Berkeley altogether. Watering down this rezoning to placate opponents who have benefited from that exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jeremiah Maller
District 1 Berkeley Resident

Jeremiah Maller
rjmaller@gmail.com
1021 Magnolia St, Apt A
Oakland, California 94607-2230

Planning Commission

From: Adam Rogers <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:34 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council without further delays.

This is what Berkeley voters have consistently asked for—more, taller buildings for people to live in, near some of the best neighborhoods in America. Applying the same standard as we're going to have along San Pablo Ave. to these other wonderful streets is the right thing to do.

Yet the draft ordinance instead caves to the self-interested and misinformed demands of a few dozen folks who've already lost the debate. It makes Berkeley zoning *more* complicated and less fair, and in doing so denies future housing to people who need it at the moment when Berkeley has promised to not do that anymore.

It's been two years of meetings, analysis, and briefings. The city has a horrifying shortage of housing that we've promised the state government we're going to rectify. These corridors are transit-dense, full of amenities, near good schools and green space. The businesses that line them depend on foot traffic, whether or not their owners recognize that fact. And Berkeley has a long history of restricting housing, mostly for racist reasons. We have a lot to fix and a lot to atone for.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Adam Rogers
Council District 1

Adam Rogers
jetjocko@gmail.com
814 Jones St.
Berkeley, California 94710

Planning Commission

From: Mari Casabonne <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:10 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marie Casabonne
Berkeley resident

Mari Casabonne
mccasabonne@gmail.com
1621 Curtis st
Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: James Mahady <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 9:06 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

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Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jimmy Mahady
Berkeley Council District 1 Resident

James Mahady
jamahady@gmail.com
1621 Curtis St
Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Gabriel Wheaton <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 8:37 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

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The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

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On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

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Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Gabriel Wheaton
Southwest Berkeley

Gabriel Wheaton
gabrielwheaton@gmail.com
1107 Carleton St
Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Gabriel Wheaton <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 8:36 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

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Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Gabriel Wheaton

gabrielwheaton@gmail.com

1107 Carleton St

Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Michael Yarne <michael@blackoakgroup.co>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 8:30 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Planning Commissioners,

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I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Michael Yarne

michael@blackoakgroup.co

2442 Valley St

Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Julia Raifman <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 7:21 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

Thank you for your service.

I am writing in support of the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council. I hope you may consider doing so quickly and without further delays that affect our whole community.

I am grateful to voters for supporting a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

I am disappointed by the draft ordinance that falls far short of seven stories, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently

needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Building more homes will improve affordability in these corridors.

I share commitment to business vitality in our community and seven stories of housing is aligned with it. Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. They depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I am committed to fostering a Berkeley community that is diverse and welcoming. The zoning proposal is in some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed lower income and lower wealth residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. There has been a stark decline in Berkeley's African American/Black population in particular. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Julia Raifman
Council District 5

Julia Raifman
jularaifman@gmail.com
1631 Cedar St
Berkeley, California 94703

Planning Commission

From: Justin Griffith <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 6:01 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

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The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

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Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Justin Griffith

justingriffith@gmail.com

1045 57th St, Oakland

Oakland, California 94608-2705

Planning Commission

From: Oban Lopez <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 5:01 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the seven-story Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, without further delay.

I live in District 8 with my parents. I love this neighborhood. I love the schools, the streets, the parks, but I am increasingly certain that the housing crisis will eventually push me out of California entirely, because there is simply no realistic path to affording a home here.

The draft ordinance before you tonight falls short of the direction Council gave, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked sites rather than the full corridors. I urge the Commission to push back and send Council a recommendation that honors its original direction: seven-story base zoning along the full extent of all three corridors.

I want to be clear-eyed about what this is. Upzoning three corridors in one city is a drop in the bucket. It will not fix the California housing crisis on its own. But every drop counts, and every delay means more people priced out, more renters locked into bidding wars, and more young people concluding that staying here simply is not realistic.

These are Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods, with great schools, transit, and amenities. That is exactly why more people should be able to live here. Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full corridors and send this to Council now.

Thank you for your consideration.

Oban Lopez-Bassols
District 8

Oban Lopez
Obanlopezb@gmail.com
25 Hazel Road
Berkeley, California 94705

Planning Commission

From: Phyllis Orrick <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 4:58 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Permit maximum allowable base height in North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

As a longtime Berkeley resident who lives a block from San Pablo and who has been finally seeing that area coming alive with new residents, including the much-anticipated workforce housing at 1701 San Pablo, I urge you to recommend the straightforward, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues..

The draft before you falls too far short, limiting it to so-called "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additional supposed refinements complicate, rather than simplify the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should honor the direction it was given.

Phyllis Orrick
D1

Phyllis Orrick
poberkeley@gmail.com
1625 Kains
Berkeley , California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Sabin Ray <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 2:47 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: YES TO MORE HOUSING IN BERKELEY!

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I have lived in Berkeley for the last 7 years and I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

Housing is one of the most important issues for me as a voter when it comes to local elections. I want to support candidates that encourage MORE housing, as that is how we lower prices for all, reduce emissions, and improve equity & equality in our communities. I feel so blessed to live in Elmwood and would like others to have the opportunity to do so as well.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given. Liberal voters like myself today want less red-tape on housing NOT more, and we will vote accordingly.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sabin Ray
Elmwood, District 8 Resident

Sabin Ray
sabinhray@gmail.com
2822 Garber Street
Berkeley, California 94705

Planning Commission

From: Gabriel Lesser <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 2:45 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: We need zoning permitting 7 stories in all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am an 8-year resident of Elmwood and have come to consider Berkeley my home. However, with the lack of development in neighborhoods like mine, I fear that as I start a family I will be priced out and lose the community I have been building. I therefore write encouraging you to recommend the seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council without any further delays. I want to see my community and neighborhood thrive, and I strongly believe that this is the way to do it.

I currently get around by walking, biking, and taking public transit. The North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenue areas are perfect for this type of lifestyle, and adding housing there will permit them to keep thriving without pricing out the types of residents who might use those resources. The zoning ordinance is a question of equity and environmental benefit. It also would move in the direction of building a Berkeley of the future, not an only-for-the-rich one stuck in the past.

To put it simply, I think the draft ordinance before you tonight falls in inadequate. It should apply the 7-unit housing across the full corridors. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

Please send this to Council promptly. The longer this sits, the longer residents like me wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors,

minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, and preserve ground-floor retail requirements.

This is a question of equity and environment, exactly the moral compass that encouraged me to move to Berkeley in the first place.

Thank you very much

Gabriel Lesser, of District 8 (and someone starting a family in Berkeley!)

Gabriel Lesser
gabrielslesser@gmail.com
2822 Garber St
Berkeley, 94705

Planning Commission

From: Candace <the.candace@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 4, 2026 1:19 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Protect the Elmwood's Small Businesses

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I will be out of town this Wednesday, so I am writing to express my support of CM Humbert's well considered tailored zoning proposal that considers 3 properties on College avenue for housing developments.

As an architect, I've watched numerous housing developments over the years fail to engage the community at the street level. An example of this is outside of the Ashby Bart station, where the otherwise successful and celebrated Maudelle Miller Shirek Community building offers our neighborhood a hostile street facade that uses an oversized purple knuckle to turn its back on a vibrant corner. The Adeline/Ashby corners are an important part of our urban fabric, and yet the developer wasn't required to enhance a critical pedestrian path with setbacks or even a clear sense of an entrance. The public failure of housing developments in critical areas to humanely address our streets frightens me when I think of how poorly designed development could harm the already challenged College Avenue businesses.

We desperately need market-rate and affordable housing in my neighborhood, but the City of Berkeley's Planning Commission must use all your General Plan tools in order to protect your constituents from the worst instincts of developers. College Avenue has a unique vernacular, and it is possible to retain the scale of this streetscape by regulating height setbacks from the street. We can have both housing and a vibrant, modern city. LEED/USGBC offers excellent guidance on designing for walkable streets in credit LT7.

I am grateful that CM Humbert and his office have created this compromise that both addresses our need for housing while protecting the unique small businesses that make our neighborhood so special and valuable to everyone in Berkeley and the East Bay.

Thank you,
Candace Taira
2609 Webster Street



Who would ever know that there is a vibrant community service agency at the street level? This was a beautiful opportunity to showcase that community connection and anchor a major transit hub. The Academy Museum used a smaller, lighter colored column from an historic and iconic building in Los Angeles. Good architecture can also help the commission meet its ecology goals in that the buildings will live on. People will opt to walk when architecture is obligated to address the pedestrian experience.



LEED Credit LT 7

<https://www.usgbc.org/credits/lt7>

A commercial facade example:



Planning Commission

From: joel@casahopkins.com
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 10:55 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: CZU

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I truly do not understand why you are considering the Corridor Zoning Upgrade as a serious proposal. Berkeley residents are concerned about affordable housing and livable neighborhoods,, and the CZU will provide the opposite. Rather than keeping the existing 2-3 story limits and encourage builders who want to go higher to include affordable housing in their buildings as happened recently at Shattuck and Virginia, the CZU will create mid-rise buildings without any affordable housing or even any commercial space included.

It is misleading to state that with a 100% state density bonus, a 68 foot height limit would give rise to a 12 story 128 foot building, and you don't expect a 100% density bonus to be used, in any case. At 2029 University, in an area [zoned for 75 ft, nominally 7 stories, a 256 ft, 23 story building](#) was approved using the density bonus laws. How can you say that a 68 foot height limit will only grow to 128 feet? A proportional ratio would result in a building 20+ stories. If it can happen on University Avenue, it can happen on Solano, College, North Shattuck, San Pablo— anywhere where a similar height limit is put in effect.

Do you really believe these high-rises can be built without destroying the shopping districts, which thrive on the human scale and promote a sense of community and human interactions? Please envision those towering buildings near where your favorite places used to be on Solano, College, and North Shattuck, and a streetscape filled with empty storefronts or no storefronts at all.

We are constantly told that a major goal of this rezoning plan is to create “equity”— giving everyone a chance to live in “high resource” areas of Berkeley. This plan will create market rate mid-rise buildings, or high-rises *much* taller than 12 stories (up to 20+), and destroy successful commercial corridors in Elmwood, North Shattuck and Solano Avenue. The “equity” they create will be making those areas more equivalent to the struggling downtown and San Pablo Avenue areas.

The only way to prevent this scenario is to keep the existing zoning throughout the commercial districts. If developers want to build to higher, let them provide at least a modicum of affordable housing. As for the prospect of towering 20 story high-rises in our thriving commercial areas, let me listen to the commissioners defend them, rather than pretend they cannot exist.

I would like to hear some discussion of these points among the commissioners.

Thank you for your time,
Joel Myerson

Planning Commission

From: Connie Clausen <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 10:41 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Planning Commissioners,

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I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

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Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

[Your name]

[Your council district, optional]

Connie Clausen

connie.clausen@gmail.com

2425 SHATTUCK AVE APT 408

BERKELEY, California 94704

Planning Commission

From: Sarah Holt <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 10:36 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

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The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

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Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sarah Holt
Council District 2

Sarah Holt
sallie.holt@gmail.com
2200 Sacramento street
Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Daniel Keller <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 10:31 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

The bay area is experiencing a housing crisis stemming from decades of underbuilding. This has pushed out many people who would love to live in this beautiful city, and housing demand directly contributes to our increased unhoused population. Not to mention driving population towards car-dependent sprawl, or - along with their congressional apportionment - other states entirely.

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

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I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been

underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Daniel Keller

Daniel Keller

dankeller@gmail.com

5356 James Ave

Oakland, California 94618

Planning Commission

From: Ben Gerhardstein <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 10:12 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Thank you for your consideration.

Ben Gerhardstein
District 2

Ben Gerhardstein
ben.gerhardstein@gmail.com
2320 acton St
Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: Frances Moore <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 9:49 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

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Thank you for your consideration.

Frances Moore
District 4

Frances Moore
fmoore125@gmail.com
1761 University Avenue
Berkeley, California 94703

Planning Commission

From: Nancy Facher <nancyfacher@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 9:23 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Chair Marthinsen and Members of the Berkeley Planning Commission,

I am writing to urge you to recommend the simple, seven-story version of the Corridors Zoning Update to the City Council, and to do so now, without further delays.

The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

Some have argued that upzoning to seven stories will actually reduce affordable housing production by removing developers' incentive to trigger the state density bonus. However, that perspective fails to take into account the economic reality that housing development operates on razor-thin margins that have been getting worse and worse. Further restricting the size of projects will push more projects into infeasibility. Reducing zoned capacity is not a recipe for producing more subsidized housing; it is a strategy for producing less housing of every kind. Fewer homes in these desirable areas mean that renters and prospective buyers will remain locked into bidding wars over scarcer options. The way to improve affordability in these corridors is to allow more homes, period.

On the business vitality question: Solano, North Shattuck, and the Elmwood are neighborhood retail districts. Their appeal is that they are not surrounded in a sea of parking lots like big box stores, so they depend on walk-in customers from nearby homes and transit. Today, those blocks are surrounded by some of the most expensive, lowest-density housing in Berkeley. Adding hundreds of new homes above and adjacent to these corridors means more neighbors who walk to Zachary's, to Cheeseboard, to the Elmwood Café. Sales tax analysis has shown that access to strong foot traffic sustains vibrant small businesses. More residents living on the corridor is a great way to achieve that.

Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy Facher
734 Peralta
Berkeley CA 94707

District 5

Nancy Facher
nancyfacher@sbcglobal.net
734 Peralta Avenue
Berkeley, California 94707

Planning Commission

From: Sean Lin <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 9:16 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please allow seven stories base zoning across all of North Shattuck, College, and Solano

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

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The voters spoke when they installed a pro-housing Council, and City Council could not have been clearer when five of those nine members directed staff to study a seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, Solano, and College Avenues. That is the same standard the city is establishing on San Pablo Avenue and other major corridors: a reasonable, consistent floor for transit-served streets in a city facing a severe housing shortage.

Yet the draft ordinance before you tonight falls far short of that direction, proposing as few as four stories in some places and limiting upzoning to a handful of handpicked "opportunity sites" rather than applying it across the full corridors. Additionally, the proposed direction introduces additional classes of properties with the opportunity sites, complicating, rather than simplifying the zoning patchwork, as well as picking winners and losers on individual parcels. The Commission should push back on that scaling-back and send Council a recommendation that honors the direction it was given.

I also urge the Commission to send this to Council promptly. This process has been underway for well over two years, and is part of Berkeley's Housing Element commitment. There have been multiple community workshops, surveys, study sessions, subcommittee reports, and Council briefings. The city has the analysis it needs and additional study will not resolve the opposition of entrenched interests. It will only delay the homes Berkeley urgently needs. The longer this sits, the longer residents wait for housing, and the longer Berkeley remains out of compliance with its own Housing Element commitments to the state.

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Finally, I want to emphasize the fair housing dimension of this decision. These are some of Berkeley's highest-resource neighborhoods: areas with excellent schools, safe streets, good air quality, strong transit access, and abundant parks and amenities. These are precisely the enclaves that California's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing law is meant to open up. For decades, exclusionary zoning pushed disadvantaged residents towards the freeway and out of Berkeley in general. The Corridors rezoning is one of Berkeley's most concrete opportunities to begin reversing that history and allow a broader slice of people to live near the resources and opportunities concentrated in these neighborhoods. Watering down the proposal to placate opponents who have and continue to benefit from their exclusivity would be a moral failure, not just a policy one.

Please recommend seven-story base zoning along the full extent of the three corridors, minimize setbacks and stepdowns that would reduce buildable capacity, preserve ground-floor retail requirements where appropriate, and send this to Council without further delay. Berkeley made a commitment. It is time to honor it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sean

Sean Lin

seanxlin1@gmail.com

2210 Bonar Street

Berkeley, California 94702

Planning Commission

From: lucysmallsreed@comcast.net
Sent: Sunday, May 3, 2026 1:04 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please support tailored zoning for the Corridors Zoning Update

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the Planning Commission,
I am writing to you to urge your support for the tailored zoning approach championed by Councilmember Humbert. Limiting rezoning to the sites with the greatest level of housing opportunity will ease displacement pressures on existing businesses, while serving to maintain projected capacity for new housing.

Extended vacancies as a result of stalled development projects are a real concern, as evidenced by the boarded-up block of Center Street between Oxford and Shattuck Avenue, as well as the vacant pit behind the Shattuck Hotel. An incremental approach focused on sites that do not feature vibrant, pedestrian-oriented retail would help guard against such outcomes, especially at a time of such economic volatility.

Councilmember Humbert's compromise could be a win-win: protecting merchants and retail vitality while still meeting current targets for creating new homes. In the Elmwood especially, targeting the rezoning to the sites with the highest opportunity for new homes (as previously identified by the project team) will have little to no effect on the projected housing capacity of that corridor.

Thank you to Planning Commission members, staff, and the rest of the project team for their openness and dedication throughout this process.

Respectfully,

Lucy Smallsreed
3029 Hillegass Ave
Berkeley 94705

Planning Commission

From: Sean Golden <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 2, 2026 12:20 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Implement SB 79 Now — Don't Wait 7 Years

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I'm writing to urge you to implement SB 79's zoning changes now, rather than deferring them to the next Housing Element cycle. I also ask the city not to put forward an alternative plan; SB 79 locates housing exactly where it needs to be.

SB 79 — California's landmark transit-oriented housing law — requires cities to allow mid-rise housing near major transit stops. Berkeley is exactly the kind of transit-rich city this law was designed for. More homes near BART means more residents who can live car-free, reduce their emissions, and support the transit infrastructure we've already built. Waiting seven years to implement it means seven more years of housing scarcity, rising rents, and missed opportunities to build the walkable, transit-oriented neighborhoods Berkeley should be leading on.

Please act now. The housing crisis won't wait, and neither should Berkeley.

Thank you for your service to our community.

Sean Golden
spgolden@gmail.com
7287 Claremont Ave
Berkeley, California 94705

Planning Commission

From: Sean Golden <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 2, 2026 12:19 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Support for Berkeley taking bold action to allow more housing along its commercial corridors

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Planning Commissioners,

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We are writing to strongly support the City Council's direction to set seven-story base zoning for North Shattuck, College, and Solano Avenues. We commend Council for taking a real stand on housing and urge you to fully implement this vision. We support at least seven stories' base zoning and ask you not to water down the proposal with setbacks, stepdowns, and other requirements that would reduce the number of homes that could get built on any parcel. Many of these parcels are oddly shaped or present other obstacles to development, so they need whatever flexibility we can provide.

Seven-story zoning could contribute meaningful amounts of housing to address affordability and create mixed-income neighborhoods where teachers, service workers, young families, and long-time residents can live. Seven stories is transit-appropriate for corridors with AC Transit service and is standard in successful transit-oriented neighborhoods throughout the Bay Area.

Seven-story base zoning will also support local businesses with more foot traffic, reduce car dependency to support our climate commitments, and open Berkeley's opportunity-rich neighborhoods to everyone. We have a legal and a moral duty to affirmatively further fair housing.

We urge you to support the Council's clear direction without reduction or compromise. What's at stake is having people in our commercial districts to keep our businesses alive and thriving.

Respectfully,
Sean

Sean Golden
spgolden@gmail.com
7287 Claremont Ave
Berkeley, California 94705

Planning Commission

From: Planning Commission
Sent: Friday, May 1, 2026 1:33 PM
To: BPEorg; Planning Commission
Subject: Re: Questions regarding seating arrangements for the May 6th meeting

Due to the locations of outlets and network jacks, and the lengths of various cords, our set-up for PC meetings now is:

- Staff table is located in front of the windows;
- The Commission is seated at three long tables in front of the west wall;
- The audience is seated in rows in front of the Commissioners' table;
- There is one zoom/screen to the Commissioners' left, along the entrance wall;
- An additional screen for the audience to the Commissioners' right.
- The microphone for public comment is behind the audience seating, and the amplifier for the mike is in the rear, as well

I hope the above is helpful.



Justin Horner

Principal Planner
Planning and Development, Land Use Division
1947 Center St., 2nd Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704
Phone: (510) 981-7476
Email: jhorner@berkeleyca.gov
In Office Days: Monday – Thursday
Remote Day: Friday

The Permit Service Center (PSC), including the zoning counter, is open between 8:30 am – 2:30 pm (final check in at 2:00 pm) Monday through Thursday.

All permit-related and Zoning services are available online. Please visit us [online](#) for more information.

From: BPEorg <bpeorg2024@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2026 6:52 PM

To: Planning Commission <PlanningPC@berkeleyca.gov>

Subject: Questions regarding seating arrangements for the May 6th meeting

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Greetings Mr. Horner/Ms Shen,

Berkeley Public Eye will be video recording the May 6th meeting at 6:30 pm.

To help facilitate our ability to record, please confirm that the seating arrangements will be changed from pre-Hybrid meetings. That is the audience will have their backs to the windows and the Commissioners will be arranged against the entrance wall. The staff table will be to the right (east), that is viewing from the camera, as it was before. Where will the screen be located?

Thank you for this information. It will help with our prep.

-bernard

Planning Commission

From: Bruce Feingold <drbrucefeingold@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2026 2:43 PM
To: Berkeley Mayor's Office; All Council; Planning Commission; Humbert, Mark; Bruce Feingold
Subject: May 6 Corridor Meeting

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commission, Mayor & Council,

I am writing regarding the May 6th Meeting and I am asking that you work with the businesses and neighborhoods in several ways.

I emphasize that you are a Planning Commission. The 2024-2025 report on housing clearly shows that developers have almost uniformly built high density buildings with studios and one bedrooms with very few units designed for families and have paid little attention to urban planning such as natural amenities and intimate spaces.

We can both have more housing and orient our planning towards liveable space!

I have closely read the San Pablo and Corridor feedback summarized by the consultants. In my opinion, Berkeley citizens want both housing and they want the urban intimate spaces which Berkeley has managed to support.

Please adopt

1
Link building height to street width for better urban, community spaces: cities like Paris use proportional relationships between street width and building height to preserve light, air, and walkability, so Berkeley could adopt a standard where height is limited to about 55% to 60% of street width to create consistent, human-scaled corridors.

2
Use State Density Bonus as the Primary Growth Mechanism: The California State Density Bonus Law allows additional height when affordable units are included. Keep base zoning moderate as an incentive for developers to provide below-market housing instead of building to maximum height by right with no affordability.

3
Adopt Context-Sensitive Zoning Instead of Uniform Corridor Upzoning: Berkeley's commercial corridors vary widely, so please focus on greater height near transit hubs while limiting it in fragile small business districts reduces displacement pressure and avoids forcing parcel consolidation that disrupts existing retail ecosystems.

Thanks for your consideration,

Bruce H. Feingold, Ph.D.
Berkeley, CA

--

Bruce H. Feingold, Ph.D.
PSY7464
2930 Domingo Avenue, #241
Berkeley, CA 94705
(510) 915-2587
drbrucefeingold@gmail.com

Please be advised that confidentiality of email transmission can not be guaranteed. Confidentiality notice: This email and any attachments may contain privileged and confidential information intended solely for the use of the addressee(s) named herein. If you are not the intended recipient of this email, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this email, and any attachments, is prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please notify the sender immediately via electronic mail and delete this message and all copies and back ups in their entirety. Thank you.

Planning Commission

From: John J. Parman <j2parman@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2026 11:47 AM
To: Planning Commission
Cc: Steve Ratcliff; Arch St Neighbors; Spruce-n-vine; Blackaby, Brent; Berkeley Mayor's Office; Humbert, Mark; O'Keefe, Shoshana; Tregub, Igor; McWhorter, Laurie
Subject: Memo to the Planning Commission and Director Jordan Klein
Attachments: Corridor Memo 30 Apr 2026.pdf

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Justin Horner and Alisa Shen
Planning and Development

Dear Mr. Horner and Ms. Shen,

We, neighbors to the east of the North Shattuck Corridor study area, recently sent a memo to our Council Member, Brent Blackaby, and others on the Council (Mayor Ishii and Council Members Humbert, O'Keefe, and Tregub). We have readdressed our memo to the Planning Commissioners and Planning and Development Director Klein. Other neighbors have signed on, and their names appear at the end of the memo. Steve Ratcliff and I drafted and circulated it.

We applaud the Planning Commission for redirecting the Corridors study, but are concerned that focusing on the most likely development sites in the absence of a real area plan with meaningful local input amounts to spot rezoning. The Panoramic Interests project along the North Shattuck corridor and the proposal for the Poulet site nearby strike many of us as an extension of downtown rather than a good fit with what is primarily a residential corridor. Earlier projects, such as those across from the Corso restaurant on the east side of Shattuck are the precedent we favor.

We want to stress that our neighborhood is not opposed to added density, but we want to preserve our walkable area's scale, its vibrant street life, and its essential differences from downtown Berkeley, which could be easily eroded by even modest upzoning, thanks to the density bonus. Our proposals reflect this.

If you could forward our memo to the Commissioners and Director Klein, we would be grateful. If there's a better way to do this, please let us know.

Sincerely,

John J. Parman
1428 Arch St.

Steve Ratcliff
1431 Arch St.

Planning Commission

From: Christina Hecht <ceahecht@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2026 10:44 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please support tailored zoning for the Corridors Zoning Update

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the Planning Commission,

I live in the greater Elmwood area.

I am writing to you to urge your support for the tailored zoning approach championed by Councilmember Humbert. Limiting rezoning to the sites with the greatest level of housing opportunity will ease displacement pressures on existing businesses, while serving to maintain projected capacity for new housing.

Extended vacancies as a result of stalled development projects are a real concern, as evidenced by the boarded-up block of Center Street between Oxford and Shattuck Avenue, as well as the vacant pit behind the Shattuck Hotel. An incremental approach focused on sites that do not feature vibrant, pedestrian-oriented retail would help guard against such outcomes, especially at a time of such economic volatility.

Councilmember Humbert's compromise could be a win-win: protecting merchants and retail vitality while still meeting current targets for creating new homes. In the Elmwood especially, targeting the rezoning to the sites with the highest opportunity for new homes (as previously identified by the project team) will have little to no effect on the projected housing capacity of that corridor.

Thank you to Planning Commission members, staff, and the rest of the project team for their openness and dedication throughout this process.

Respectfully,

Christina Hecht

Sent from my iPhone

Planning Commission

From: Ted Obbard <ted.obbard@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 6:43 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Please support tailored zoning for the Corridors Zoning Update

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear members of the Planning Commission,

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Thank you to Planning Commission members, staff, and the rest of the project team for their openness and dedication throughout this process.

Respectfully,

Ted Obbard
Berkeley District 8 resident

Planning Commission

From: Matthew Ross <matthew61ross@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 10:12 PM
To: Planning Commission
Cc: Matthew Ross
Subject: Upzoning
Attachments: Dear Mark and Eric April 5.docx

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commission Members: Attached is a letter signed by 40 households living within one or two blocks of the Elmwood 'opportunity sites' expressing our serious reservations about the future development of these locations and calling for a traffic and parking study to be performed by the City before the issuance of your final recommendations to the Council. Please consider this statement along with the other input you are receiving. Thanks, Matthew Ross

Planning Commission

From: Matthew Ross <matthew61ross@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 6:37 AM
To: Planning Commission
Cc: Matthew61Ross
Subject: Upzoning
Attachments: Dear Neighbors April 5 Draft.docx

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Commission Members: Attached is a letter signed by 40 households just in the one or two blocks surrounding the two Elmwood 'opportunity' sites you are considering for site-specific upzoning. The letter states our serious concerns about this upzoning, the impact on traffic and parking in our neighborhood, the size of the contemplated buildings and addresses other concerns. Our letter also calls for a traffic and parking study to be performed before your Commission makes its final recommendations to the Council and before possible Council action. Matthew Ross, 2734 Russell Street.

Planning Commission

From: Peggy Scott <plscott@stanfordalumni.org>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 3:12 PM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: May 6 meeting - Zoning Map Amendment, Solano Ave.

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Berkeley Planning Commission
RE: May 6 meeting - Zoning Map Amendment, Solano Ave.
Comments by Peggy Scott, neighborhood resident
April 28, 2026

To the Planning Commission:

For over 30 years I have resided on Catalina Ave., a mere 150 steps from Andronico's Market on Solano Ave. I understand, and basically agree with the City's desire to build housing.

First of all, I want to state my strong opinion that the Commission should do everything to avoid the NIMBY vs. YIMBY designation being slung around. Leave that judgmental behavior to the Republicans in Washington. We don't need such divisive name-calling in Berkeley. I for one am all for housing, and I don't mind it in my neighborhood. But I strenuously disagree with the heights being proposed, and so unlike so many things that happen in Berkeley, I propose **moderation.**

Housing – yes. Highrises – NO.

Also please educate yourselves about building anything on the lot currently occupied by the 76 station at Solano and Colusa. **It is extraordinarily expensive, and potentially impossible, to remove underground gas tanks and clean up a gas station site** to the point that the high level of toxics are no longer a factor.

North Shattuck is lined with buildings that are limited to four-story construction. The same is true for Oxford Street – four stories, for many blocks. Other than downtown and along the San Pablo corridor, this seems a natural height limit, allowing the neighborhoods to remain at human scale. Berkeley already has a four-story height limit naturally, all over town. Trying to further urbanize Berkeley's outlying neighborhoods will destroy their character. We need healthy business districts for a healthy economy. Please don't ruin the lifeblood of our commercial districts just to cram in more units.

Downtown a whole block of terrific ethnic restaurants has been raised on Center Street, right across from BAM PFA. That said, there are other blocks with other restaurants and shops to fill in. When you raise and ruin a block of Solano Ave., there is nowhere for those shops to go. They will be dead

and you will have killed them. For years, businesses have already been moving down Solano to Albany, which is thriving – it is more active, more full and more fun. Why? For over a decade I have been asking successive District 5 councilmembers to look into Albany business practices and try to determine why Albany has a better business climate than Berkeley. No one has taken up the challenge. Perhaps if they wanted to know the answer they would.

I hope you will consider these views when you discuss up-zoning Solano Ave.

**Housing – yes. Highrises – NO.
Limit new buildings to 4 stories.
And probably leave the Union 76 station as it is.**

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Peggy Scott

Peggy Scott plscott@stanfordalumni.org Mobile: 510-816-1960

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." Maya Angelou

"If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go where they went." -- Will Rogers

Planning Commission

From: Catherine Varnau <cvarnau@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 11:27 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Comments on Housing Plan for Solano, College, North Shattuck

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

I have a few comments on the housing plan which I hope you include in the package for May 6:

First, I believe that the 'consultants'" conclusions are totally wrong and should not be accepted unilaterally. Why are we creating higher density in 'well-resourced' areas -- instead of creating new and vibrant neighborhoods? Fourth Street is an excellent example of a newly created neighborhood in a transitioning area that is thriving. There are plenty of other neighborhoods that would benefit from more housing, and more retail. **I object to the utter lack of imagination of this entire plan!** Create new vibrant neighborhoods in Berkeley (and bring back the community movie theatres!)

I would support a plan to bring in additional housing on Solano -- but limited to 6 stories. Let's re-think putting up to 11 stories in these neighborhoods.

Second, part of the resistance to taller buildings in our neighborhoods (mine on Solano) is that downtown Berkeley has not been a success in bringing in families and young professionals. Many of those buildings have spaces for 'students' that include large bedrooms and smaller common areas so that 4 students can fit in 2 and 3 bedrooms at a high rent. **I call it fake affordable housing.** The buildings are ugly when they could have been more attractive like the Trader Joe's building and a few others. Clearly built for **maximum profit** and **not to enhance the community.** We need to attract young professionals and families in more affordable spaces. More interesting architecture in keeping with tradition. No more ugly square, glass buildings!

Most importantly, - we demand more transparency as to **who is developing and profiting from these buildings.** Are they local builders paying California taxes? Or are they big companies who are rushing off to Florida to avoid taxes. We need to vet these companies and know they will actually benefit our communities -- not take their profits and run.

Please consider modifying the plan to create more neighborhoods in Berkeley rather than increasing density in these narrow corridors already heavily trafficked. (Not to mention the impact on emergency plans but that is another big issue.)

Regards,
Catherine
415-203-0633

Gratitude unlocks of the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough and more

Planning Commission

From: Toby Warner <toby.warner@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 9:02 AM
To: Planning Commission
Subject: Comment on Zoning Ordinance Along College Avenue

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

This is a comment for the Planning Commission meeting for the public hearing pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 23.412 for Weds May 6. I'm a resident of Webster St near the proposed rezoning area of College Ave.

I'm concerned about the impacts of this proposal on traffic and air quality. This stretch of College is a two lane street that frequently backs up. It is also not close to BART. This proposal seems like it has the potential to significantly increase congestion and thus air pollution. Has a traffic study been done?

Thanks for your consideration of this comment.