

Grove Way Neighborhood Association Comments on rezoning at 1400 Apple and 21266 Oak St

February 27, 2020

To: Edgar Maravilla, Associate Planner
City of Hayward Planning Division
777 B Street, 1st Floor
Hayward, CA 94541

From: Ann E. Maris
Resident, 1490 Grove Way
Organizer, Grove Way Neighborhood Association

Dear Planner Maravilla,

My comments here are in regard to the rezoning application of a former 238 parcel in my neighborhood to commercial zoning (reference: 2020000605 Zone Change). Any residential zoning should be retained because this site is in a residential neighborhood; we are a neighborhood that is trying to rebuild and stabilize after the fifty-year devastation imposed by the cancelled Caltrans 238 bypass project (officially rescinded in 2010). Adding commercial zoning for a hotel does not benefit our local population or contribute toward stabilizing the neighborhood. We have no hotel shortage—we have a housing shortage!

- **No need for hotels.** There are plenty of nearby hotels (see attached figure). In addition, the nearby hotels have extremely low yelp ratings and none of the nearby Hayward hotels are even rated by AAA.

- **Site is in a residential area.** The proposed rezoned site is at a freeway on-ramp, but is otherwise completely surrounded by residential housing. Housing is located all along the 580 freeway throughout most of urban Castro Valley. The 509-unit Mesa Verde condominium complex sits above the site to the east. To the southwest of the Apple & Oak Street site, there is an attractive, fully occupied, apartment complex that is rehabbed former 238-freeway land. Behind these existing apartments, on other former 238 lands, south along Oak Street, 40 market rate townhomes are planned. Sadly, the apartments on the east side of Oak Street sit boarded up and vandalized. Other apartments are occupied by tenants. Oak Street is usually full of trash, abandoned vehicles, and semi-trucks. The tenant's children have no nearby parks and play in the pot-holed street with broken toys. A hotel is not what we need here. As well as

being close to transportation, the site is one block from Foothill Blvd. businesses. This site should be developed into some type of housing that will benefit the local population and not be rezoned to commercial.

- **We need housing rehabbed and built, not destroyed.** Instead of re-renting, as required by the 2009 Tenant Class action settlement, both Caltrans and Hayward have allowed, and currently allow, housing to go unoccupied in the site area. Just in the few blocks surrounding Oak Street and Grove Way, functional housing units that were occupied by families were torn down. Units are boarded. We have lost community. This redevelopment process not only takes homes away from people who could be living there, but also creates abandoned houses and vacant lots leading to neighborhood blight and increased transients. A stable, safe neighborhood has stable residents.

- **Rezoning is inconsistent with plans.** This rezoning does not follow the 2009 land use study adopted by Hayward City Council nor the North Hayward Plan.

- **What community members are involved?** Who is the North Hayward Task Force? The North Hayward Plan itself is very old and Hayward planning was unable to tell me any information about this current task force. The re-zoning site has Castro Valley on two sides and Cherryland on another side. The site is in a narrow finger of Hayward. Community groups should be involved in major decisions such as rezoning, as well as the local advisory councils (Eden Municipal Advisory Council and Castro Valley Advisory Council).

- **High visibility gateway area requires special planning efforts.** Per the North Hayward Plan and general observation, what happens here is important because the area is a physical gateway to several different communities. Broad public input will help develop the best use for the former 238 land here. Rezoning determines land use and so should not happen prior.

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- **We need housing quickly.** In a development survey conducted among Grove Way Neighborhood members, neighbors were split about exactly what should be built near Oak Street. A common sentiment is that we want something developed quickly. But that it should be good for neighborhood safety, and a hotel near a freeway and a cannabis dispensary does not bring healthy neighborhood contributions.

Thank you for this early opportunity to comment. We look forward to a public forum regarding redevelopment plans in the Grove/Foothill area, and to any updates.

Sincerely,

Ann E. Maris, PhD

510-303-4968

Organizer, Grove Way Neighborhood Association

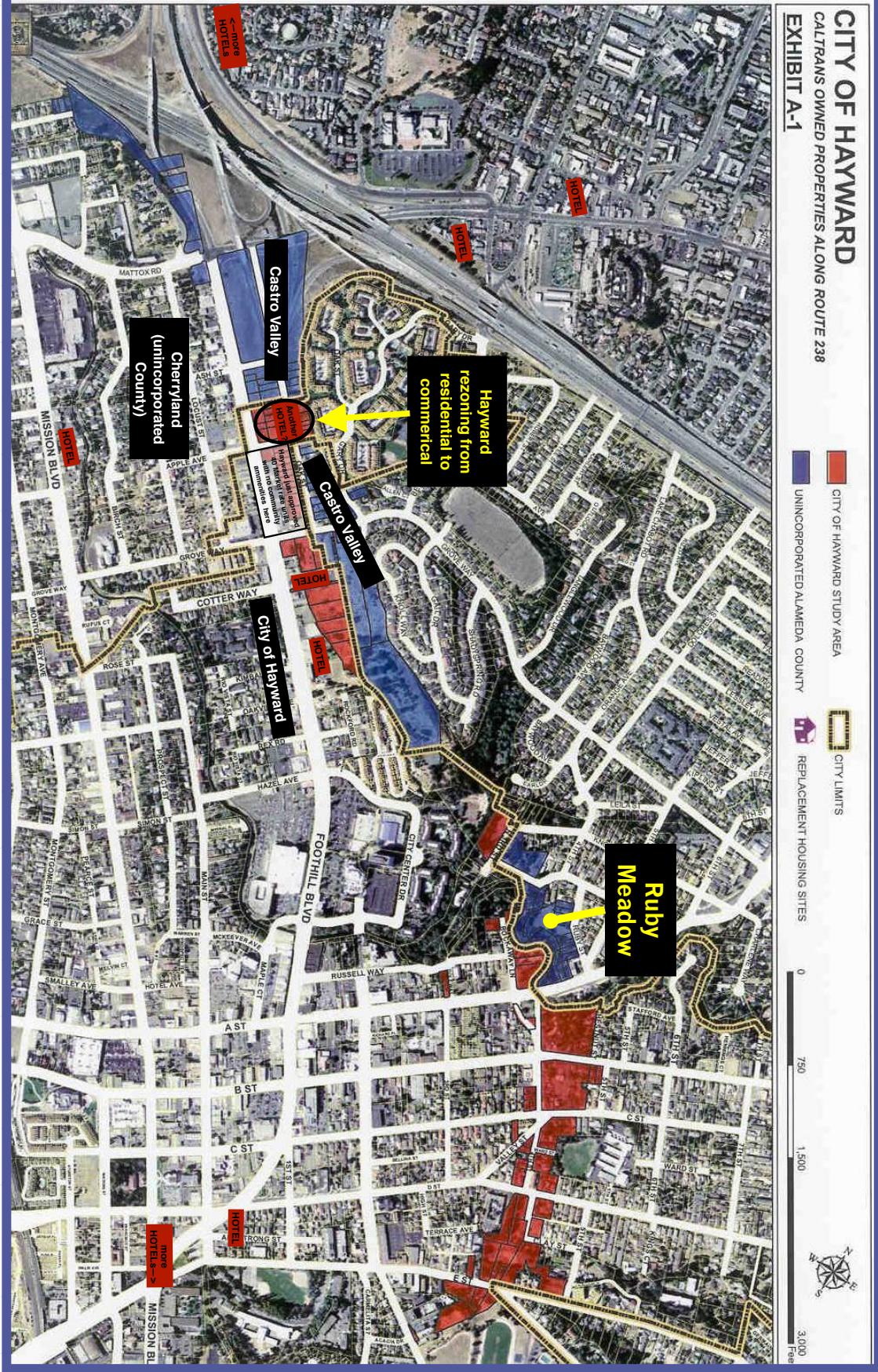
Chair, My Eden Voice! Parks and Open Space Committee

Director, Friends of San Lorenzo Creek

Organizing Director, Eden Community Land Trust

Member, Cherryland Community Association

County (blue) vs City (red)



Hi Edgar, thanks for allowing us the opportunity to comment on the rezoning for Parcel Group 9 located at Apple Ave and Oak St. The County has been aware of this change for some time, we met with Jennifer Ott on a related matter recently and she also informed us that this was coming soon. Since we share a common boundary at this location it does make good sense to coordinate land uses and to ensure one set of regulations does not hinder the other. That said, we are concerned mostly that access still be provided through this site to another landlocked site that is in County jurisdiction. Our General Plan designation on that site is Medium/High Density residential which does not appear to conflict with a general commercial use, as I understand the final goal is to construct a visitor serving use such as a hotel. We don't have an application for development on that site, nor is it known if one is forthcoming soon, but in any event I'm sure the City would agree that access must be maintained. A cluster of development at that location of multi-story buildings, combined hotel and multi-family seems to be a good use of the location.

South of your project site is also residential, at a lower density, and lies within a different General Plan area (Castro Valley). It is anticipated that a community process for this area including Parcel Groups 8, and possibly 9, will be undertaken over the next few months as the City is eager to begin developing properties it has recently purchased. We anticipate a series of possible changes to better reflect community desire will occur as a result of that process, and it's likely the focus will be on housing and open space for those parcels within County jurisdiction. The CVMAC is likely to be the venue for such a community process, as I've already mentioned to Jennifer Ott, as well as to the larger community.

Thanks again for the chance to comment, please keep us informed as the project moves forward.

Regards,

Albert V. Lopez | Planning Director

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Planning Department

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