

Date	Name	Moraga Canyon Specific Plan Comments
10/27/2023	Todd Sotkiewicz	If you really wanted survey input, you should have solicited all of the homeowners in Piedmont through the mail (you have all of our addresses after all; we all pay thousands of dollars in taxes to the city) rather than posting your survey availability on Piedmont Exedra. We all don't read that online newspaper regularly. This just seems to be another example of the City of Piedmont doing what they want to do rather than listening to the citizenry on this topic.
11/16/2023	Matt Derrigo	Dear Recreation Commission, First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for your commitment and dedication to advancing Piedmont’s recreational opportunities. As a resident of Piedmont and a parent of a 10 yr old girl who actively participates in several PRD programs, I found last night's meeting both enlightening and inspiring. Your passion and engagement in these matters are commendable. On my way home, reflecting on your discussions, especially in relation to the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan (MCSP), I believe there is a crucial aspect that warrants further attention. This is the need to proportionally grow our recreational spaces in tandem with the entire densification plan of Piedmont, as defined in the Housing Element. The MCSP certainly brings new families and demands within the study area, but it is just a part of the broader mandate of densifying our entire community. The stated goal of the MCSP on the website is merely to maintain existing amenities. However, from the presentation, it appears this might actually result in a reduction of facilities, notably by downsizing the skate park to a smaller "skate spot". To my knowledge, there is currently no mandate or expectation set for growing our recreational spaces in line with this overall growth. During the meeting, it was astutely noted that new housing will lead to increased demand, which was then translated into anticipated population growth within the Moraga Canyon. While considering facility capacity for this new demand is essential, I urge the Commission to advocate for expanding our recreational areas in response to the entire Housing Element. Without such proactive planning, we risk facing challenges in providing equitable and adequate recreational facilities for our growing population. The challenges of such planning are undoubtedly complex. However, given the imminent changes and the state's overarching densification plans, our strategies must be visionary and comprehensive. I am planning to attend the community workshop on Nov 30th and will convey these sentiments there as well. If there is more I can do, I’m very willing to provide further input or assist in any way that could be beneficial -- just let me know how. Thank you once again for your dedication to our community’s well being. I am confident that, with collaborative efforts, we can ensure that Piedmont not only grows but thrives, with recreational spaces that meet the needs of all residents, both present and future.
11/28/2023	Charles Alexander	Hi Kevin, Just learned about the Moraga Canyon plan and I cannot stress that the sewage infrastructure, wildfire threat, and landfill structure are not fit for group housing. Let alone increased traffic/parking for an already limited primary escape route. Be very careful with construction agencies making a buck vs. building a stronger existing infrastructure. Concerned Maxwellton Rd resident. Turning all of Moraga Canyon into a premier sports complex for Oakland and Piedomt makes sense. Forcing housing seems like an attempt at social/civil duty mixed with construction margin grift. Best, Charles Alexander (P.S.) Thank you. Full disclosure I am an Oakland resident fwiw. Just took a hard long look at the slides, I love the initiative, but I beg you guys to quadruple-check the implications of infrastructure. Especially in regard to fire hazards. One should expect if there was a fire event, it would be 2x 1991 given the velocity of winds from the past half-decade of wind storms. Also, is there any website with more information or an opportunity to join the planning/execution team? Thanks.
12/1/2023	Susan Garbarino	I'd like to make some additional comments now that I have attended the Nov 30th community meeting. I live in Upper Rockridge near the site and use Moraga Way frequently. I think it is imperative that Piedmont work with the City of Oakland regarding these plans as they will affect the surrounding neighborhoods. I didn't hear that this was happening at the meeting last night. My two main concerns are traffic and environmental safety. This is a very tight spot that already receives more traffic than it can bear. It is dark, curvy, prone to flooding, and surrounded by fuel for fires in the midst of a thickly settled area that has a history of wildfires. I was impressed by the presentation and plans last night. Most of my concerns are being considered. However, the proposed light at Red Rock (that "will be green most of the time" according to the presenter) didn't sound adequate. We need a light at the intersection of Harbord and Moraga. I realize that this is actually in Oakland, but it cuts between Piedmont and Oakland and must be considered. It is already a very dangerous intersection. I have witnessed more than one accident there. I will write to my City Councilperson to let her know this suggestion as well. Regarding which plan I would prefer and why: I strongly prefer Option three because it would change the current look and feel of the canyon the least. It provides some open space, allows for corporation yard access to Moraga, keeps Coaches field largely as it is while providing attractive housing set back from the road. It also looked like one of the least expensive options. I strongly dislike Option one as it would completely change the character of the canyon with 14 proposed 4 story buildings replacing Blair park. I think this would be unattractive, less safe and a shame to lose what little natural space Piedmont has. Thank you for reading this email and noting my concerns.
12/1/2023	Adam Thacher	That was a great presentation last night. My clear favorite was I think Option 3 where the corporation yard moves across Moraga and there is no parking added under the soccer baseball field. This will make the home prices higher as the folks that will but these homes will be paying a lot and prices will be higher when they know they do not have to listen to the noise from the trucks going in and out, etc. I have a follow up question I wanted to ask the woman with dark hair who was the economics consultant who was doing the feasibility work/economic modeling etc. I did not get her card. Do you have an email for her? Thanks again for the work of you and your team. Cheers - Adam Thacher (P.S.) My question is as follows: Has she (Financing Consultant) met with or talked to experienced RE developers to see if what is being envisioned so far is economically viable from a developer’s standpoint? If she has not I was going to suggest to her that there are at least 3-4 very experienced developers that live in town that she could meet with to get feedback throughout this process. I would guess that all of them care deeply about having a great end result and would be happy to meet with her informally simply as a public service. It seems like she has great experience to do the analysis but there is difference between being a consultant and having to invest in something as a business proposition as you are well aware. My wife, for one, said she would be happy to do so. And there are others who have similar experience. https://wilsonmeany.com/people/janice-thatcher/ If the consultant wants to get her input and that of others I would suggest they would be more likely to help in informal meetings not in a public setting. I can provide an introduction if needed.
12/8/2023	Lauren Tompkinns	I'm a Piedmont resident who is quite excited to see the development plans for Moraga Canyon! I would like to ask a question to see if I am interpreting the slides correctly and if so, have a followup. On slide 36: https://cdnsm5-hosted.civiclive.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_13659739/File/Government/Projects/MCSP/2023-11-30-MCSP-Community-Workshop-Presentation.pdf - Are the affordable and market rate units in separate buildings (e.g. 4 total buildings) or in the same buildings (2 total buildings)? I hope it is the later as we wouldn't want to isolate the lower income people in separate buildings. Also, is there justification somewhere of the inclusion of single family homes in the plan? Would townhomes not fit in the same space?

12/11/2023	Bruce Joffe	Dear Director Jackson, I attended the November 30 community workshop about the proposed Moraga Canyon housing project. You and I spoke about several issues, and you welcomed me to send you follow-up observations. I am concerned about the project's isolation, the low-income residents' separation, and the willingness of the project's managers to incorporate community feedback into the plans. The first part of the community meeting was a presentation by City staff and the project planning consultants to describe the project and its four options. Then, the assembled people were invited to speak one-on-one to various project team members at poster-board stations along the perimeter of the room. No opportunity was given for workshop attendees to question the project planners as a group. General questions about the overall nature of the project would not be answered by staff personnel who were designated to discuss specific options at individual poster-board stations. This gave me and several other people the feeling that the City isn't really interested in hearing and addressing our concerns. I am concerned about the isolation of the 132 new units planned for the Moraga area. There is no "urban fabric" connecting that location with the rest of Piedmont, except for the heavily-trafficked Moraga Ave. Walkers or bike riders would not see other Piedmont houses for over a quarter mile. Isolation may be a more severe problem for residents of the 60 subsidized units who may not have cars available for both going to work and for shopping or going to school. This problem could be mitigated if the City were to operate a shuttle bus, similar to the shuttles that Emeryville operates to and from the MacArthur BART station. A Piedmont shuttle could take residents down Moraga, along Piedmont Ave., across MacArthur to Grand Ave., up Grand to Oakland Ave., up Oakland to the City Center, and then along Highland back to Moraga. Connection to the BART station might even be included in the route. The City could operate the shuttle for the first five years, and then evaluate whether the amount of ridership justifies continuing, perhaps with support from passenger fees. This solution was mentioned when we spoke at the meeting, Mr. Jackson, so I am reminding you now and requesting that it be given serious consideration. A more serious problem is the planned separation of the below-market units from the market-rate units. This is a terrible idea that will have dangerous consequences. It would create a low-income "ghetto" in the midst of high-income housing. Low-income residents would be stigmatized whenever there was a problem like graffiti, or trash, or theft. The higher-income residents would instinctively blame any grime or crime on "those people" living in the separate, nearby buildings. Numerous studies have shown that when lower-income people are physically integrated into a higher-income housing project discrimination is minimized. Indeed, the lower-income residents become better integrated into the community, and their own economic circumstances improve faster than those living in separated housing. While you agreed that integration was a good idea, Mr. Jackson, you contended that separation was necessary because the subsidized housing had to be built as a separate project. This was not my experience when I developed housing for low and moderate income people, financed by both Federal and State programs, a few decades ago. Section 8's below-market rental housing units were part of a larger market-rate project financed through HUD (the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development). There was no physical difference between the rental units. A local non-profit corporation bought the project from a for-profit developer who gained the tax-shelter benefits from selling designated subsidized units at below-market rates. In Piedmont's project, some of the 132 units could be sold to individuals (72 at market rate, 60 at below-market rate), with unsold units being sold to a non-profit agency which would rent the market-rate units and the subsidized units together, with no physical distinction among the units. They would be seamlessly included within the 132-unit project. No ghetto. No separation. There are many different ways to finance such mixed-income projects - direct subsidies, tax credits, a combination of county, State and Federal funding, perhaps even some philanthropy. We discussed this possibility at the community meeting and you asserted that an integrated project was not feasible; there would have to be two separate projects. I implore you to go back and investigate State and Federal subsidy programs more thoroughly. Creating a new housing community that separates residents by their economic status creates a danger that will cost our City financially and socially in the decades to come. I hope you, the planning consultants, and the City Council act on these concerns productively, and demonstrate that you do respond to community residents' feedback.
12/15/2023	Vincent Fisher	Thanks so much for making time to meet with Liz and me. And I was great to bring the fire chief in as well. We really appreciate your view on this complicated process. Have a great weekend.
12/18/2023	John Cheney	Attachment - This is one more comment that is already on file with the City in 2017. I and others support "traffic calming alternatives". These are not fresh comments but rehashing comments made in 2017. We support "roundabouts" for calming traffic.
12/18/2023	John Cheney	DEIR Comments and attachments re educator housing: Attached are two separate comments on the Moraga Canyon EIR plan. I am open to meet anytime. Currently our groups have met with the PUSD to propose the general approach to the City.
12/23/2023	Roxanne Gault	Pala between Park and Moraga is basically wide enough for one car travel in one direction but is a 2 lane road . This road will see a huge increase in traffic for those going to a new 135 unit development. Waze already diverts traffic onto this road and cars in a rush travel very fast. The committee needs to think how the addition of these units will affect our quiet neighborhood
1/2/2024	Pam Hirtzer	Just letting you know that my neighbors a few doors down on Scenic Ave have just had their home owners insurance dropped due to severe wildfire hazard. Like myself they live above Moraga Canyon. I happen to have State Farm insuring my house, and I know that State Farm is no longer providing new policies to home owners in California deemed to be residing in high fire risk areas. Hopefully I will remain grandfathered in. This unwillingness to insure homes at risk of wildfire in California has been announced by many other insurance companies this past year. Please consider this information in the development of the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan.
1/3/2024	Marj Blackwell	Attached are copies of 2 traffic reports from past and proposed Moraga Ave. developments: 1. 1985 LSA report regarding development of Coaches Field; 2. 2010 Emmett Creason report regarding the proposed sports field in Blair Park. I would appreciate your assurance that both of these reports have been — or will be— provided to the consultants preparing the Moraga Ave. Specific Plan. As you can see, these reports — from 38 years and 13 years ago — both reference high volume traffic on Moraga Ave. and the danger to pedestrians trying to cross the road. Since then, Moraga Ave. traffic, if anything, has increased in volume and speed. In my and many others’ opinions, this is a primary issue that must be addressed before any development can occur in Moraga Canyon. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to your response..
1/8/2024	Deborah Leland	In reviewing the proposed changes to the Transportation Element in advance of the Planning Commission Study Session this evening, I would like to call two items to your attention: 1. Figure 4.2 of the Transportation Element shows Maxwelton Road in orange, indicating a road width of 20' - 25'. However, I believe Maxwelton Road should be depicted in red, indicating a road width of less than 20', per the description of Maxwelton Rd as 12' - 16' wide in the sidebar entitled "Narrow Streets" on the page following Figure 4.2. 2. Figure 4.4 and Table 4.4 omit Spring Path (from Moraga Ave just above Red Rock Rd to Abbott Way) from the City's inventory of pedestrian paths. Thank you for your attention to these items, and I hope there is opportunity to make the necessary corrections before adopting the amended Transportation Element.
1/8/2024	Ralph Catalano	Verbal comments at Planning Commission meeting
1/8/2024	Pam Hirtzer	Verbal comments at Planning Commission meeting
1/8/2024	Marj Blackwell	Verbal comments at Planning Commission meeting
1/8/2024	Andy Madeira	Verbal comments at Planning Commission meeting

1/8/2024	Liz Lummis O'Neil	We live in the neighborhood above Coaches Field and are writing in response to the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan. It was a surprise to us that all four Moraga Canyon options presented at the November 30, 2023 meeting included two market value houses on Abbott Way and Maxwelton Road. We ask that you remove these from the Moraga Specific Plan. The two places are on extremely steep and difficult to get to locations. Accessing and building in these two locations would not be cost-effective. Surely there must be other options to consider. If these additional sites have been included as a way to provide additional income to the City of Piedmont, we are confident there must be multiple other more effective and less disruptive options for raising incremental funds. The financial assessment provided by the consulting firm at the November 30, 2023 meeting was overly simplistic, ignoring the real impact of their recommendations on current residents and placing too much emphasis on income from new, seemingly arbitrarily selected sites for market value housing. Not only was the selection of these sites arbitrary, it also subjects our neighborhood to a double burden. First, a disproportionate number of new housing units (132) have been reserved for the Moraga Canyon area. Second, the City is selecting the same area in which to locate market value units to raise funds. So, in effect, we are being asked to assume the burden of raising funds to pay for a plan that already disfavors us. This is egregiously unfair. It was a surprise to see fair market value housing even in the plans as this had never been raised in prior meetings and the rationale for adding it to the plan has not been disclosed to the community. It is a curveball at the final hour. Again, we ask that these sites be removed from the plan. A broader discussion about the role of market value housing in Piedmont should be a separate topic for the City Council. As one of the two neighborhoods most impacted by the housing element, it would be nice to know that you all were looking out for us and our property values, to assure fair treatment across all of Piedmont. Plans presented, environmental impact reports, zoning discussions and the like miss the reality that we are most impacted. We ask that in good faith you factor in a buffer zone in these plans when you consider locations for the fair market housing. We all moved to Piedmont for its sense of community. It now feels like our neighborhood is being treated differently. There were other neighborhoods that could afford lawyers and understood early how to navigate the system to ensure low-income housing was removed from consideration in their areas. While it was uncomfortable to witness, for example, how quickly consideration of housing in the center or town was removed from the plan, it would be nice to know that you are looking out for us and assure fair treatment for all residents of Piedmont. Thanks for your time and attention. Sincerely, Liz Lummis O'Neil, Tom O'Neil, Vincent Fisher, Mehrak Kiankarimi, Arnie Levine, Mary Levine, Keith Dierkx and Laura Dierkx, Patty Siskind and Lawrence Siskind
1/8/2024	Liz Lummi O'Neil	Verbal comments at Planning Commission meeting
1/8/2024	Kirk Peterson	Verbal comments at Planning Commission meeting
1/8/2024	Julie Waters	Verbal comments at Planning Commission meeting
1/8/2024	Irene Cheng	Verbal comments at Planning Commission meeting
1/15/2024	Liz Lummis O'Neil	Following the meeting last Monday, January 8, we'd like to update our letter. We request that you do not add a nature trail entrance where the current fire road gate is. We request that the fire road remains gated. •Last-minute notice: This was an absolute and outrageous curveball at the final hour. The January 8 meeting was the first time any of us learned about the nature trail proposal. As it is not even part of the housing element, we'd like it removed immediately. •Fire Safety: Maxwelton has limited access for fire trucks. This can be a major hazard. For example, some youths brought tiki torches and smoking materials to the field, causing grave concern. Removing the gate and giving public access will surely exacerbate the issue. Adding parking for trailhead parking would block PFD fire truck access. •Traffic: It is not safe to factor into your plans ideas that necessitate increased traffic on Maxwelton. The proposed nature trail entrance on Maxwelton is not safe. Maxwelton is a narrow and winding road with blind curves. It is not wide enough for two cars driving in opposite directions, one car needs to pull over for oncoming traffic. •Parking: There is no space for trailhead parking. Street parking only adds to the issue of clear passage on the road. When we have visitors, they need to find parking at least a block away so we can maintain a clear passage. •Buffer zones: We request buffer zones be designed into plans for current residents. The drawing of the trail goes right past three bedroom windows and a garden gate at 190 Maxwelton Road. Further, it makes the houses at 180 Maxwelton Road, 190 Maxwelton Road and 198 Maxwelton. •Road exposed to would-be walkers, causing concern for our safety. •Trespassing concerns and home safety: This trail would give direct access to our homes on Maxwelton and Mountain View Cemetery property. The cemetery is clear that walkers on their property are only allowed access through its Piedmont Avenue entrance. •Personal Safety: On a number of occasions the Piedmont Police were called when our own efforts to subdue drunk and disorderly late-night trespassers failed. Beer cans and other remnants from partying have been left on homeowners' property. •Sound travels: We hear it when there is batting practice or trespassers on the cemetery property. We are already subject to the noise of 130+ units, plus automobiles, adding the noise of walkers and increased traffic and parking adds insult to injury. We would like to know the process in which the two single family dwellings were added to the four options and made public for community comment. There are no grade lines on any of the maps where the SFD on Maxwelton is located. This oversight therefore does not take into consideration the very steep grade. What other locations were considered? We reiterate our request that the two SFDs get removed from all four options without further discussion. As expressed in our previous email, we are currently bearing the brunt of the Housing Element plans. This is not a "blank slate:" this is a community with our homes that we have spent considerable time and resources to create and maintain. We look forward to hearing from you on the changes you will make to ensure our concerns are addressed. Sincerely, Liz Lummis O'Neil, Tom O'Neil, Arnie Levine, Mary Levine, Keith Dierkx, Laura Dierkx, Patty Siskind and Lawrence Siskind
1/16/2024	Jennifer Marinelly	This is response to Moraga Canyon Park. If you put houses there, you are going to create such a traffic congestion that people will be fed up. The park has wildlife that you are disregarding. The people on Moraga are leaving because of this and more will leave. First of all, we do not have any open land for building, and you should fight this. We do not have ample land for parks in the city of Piedmont and you are supposed to have more parks by the law and that is not the case. You now want to take more and make a wrong situation worse? What on earth are you thinking. We do not want to be San Francisco if that is what you want then move there. The City of Piedmont used to be sweet and quiet and cozy a little slice of heaven you are now making a slice of hell. Who is this person in Piedmont that is doing this. They are just trying to make money. If you do this, you are bringing in more people, more crime and some very shady people. You are displacing wildlife and the beautiful park with more concrete. Think about this, more people more problems. More people more crime, which is what will happen we do not have a police department that is able to handle this. Complaints, load cars, loud music, and all the other problems we already have, dogs attacking people and getting bit without reporting them because they threaten us. This is the time to stop, put the brakes on and really think low income will bring people sleeping in their cars and campers and also the homeless. Everyone knows that people know people and they will say we are living here in Piedmont so come stay if will be smelly, dirty and look like an ugly place. Every person will have to do what they can to protect themselves and their property as the City of Piedmont Council sends it all to hell. You will not be alive long enough to see how bad it will get but all the children will suffer and young parents, but you do not care. You are as bad as Trump, with lies telling people what they want to hear, not the truth. I wouldn't be surprised if you ended up having side shows, it will happen. People who have guns will be coming, you do not pay attention, it's all around, open your eyes. People say they want to move here, I tell them no, you do not want to, it is not at all what it used to be. So, let's think, I know people that have left because their kids were bullied in Piedmont Schools. I know some lawyers and former city council that say this is not legal, with the parks and this is very stupid idea and should get rid of the city council people. You are really going to slam that many more people into the schools that have already suffered and fell down in the standing. You already lied to people of the cost of the pool and then you raise our taxes. WE DO NOT WANT THE HOUSES, PAY THE FINE. We would agree to pay the fine, not like you do not get enough money from, us be real. Piedmont is supposed to be an upscale place, you are making us be like East Oakland. So again, if you like that then then move there and good luck surviving. It is coming our way especially with this wrong, wrong plan. Thank you.
1/18/2024	Chris Read	Option 1 is the the superior plan for Moraga Canyon: -The current Blair Park, south of Moraga Ave is underutilized; if you must build housing in the canyon, build it there! Despite being a park for a long time, almost nobody uses it! -The open space above the skate park and corporation yard would make a superior park, with hiking trails through grand oak trees yielding majestic Bay Area views. This area is already a wildlife sanctuary for deer, fox, coyote, turkey, owl, etc. In the 1800's this land north of Moraga Ave was part of the historic 75 acre amusement park developed by the founder of Piedmont, Walter Blair https://www.historyofpiedmont.com and https://localwiki.org > Blair's_Park . -Please do not locate housing North of Moraga Ave. The area was historically an amusement park and should be a recreation park area again for the people of Piedmont. Thanks for your efforts on this!

3/1/2024	Ralph Catalano, Ph.D., Distinguished Emeritus Professor of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley	Council Members, I am attaching the comments I had hoped to make at today's study session. Having heard the consultant's comments and your questions, I would add the following. Two entrances, not one (as the consultant graphic shows), will be required to serve 132 units of housing in Blair Park. These would have to meet minimum safety standards for spacing from each other as well as from Red Rock and Maxwellton. As the 2010 LSA analyses (attached) showed, such road segments could not meet Caltrans corner sight distance standards for safety if the 85th percentile traffic speed were 35 MPH. As your consultant acknowledged today, we know that the 85th percentile speed on Moraga is now close to, if not, 40 MPH. Your consultant stated, for reasons left unclear, that Piedmont should assume just one entrance/exit and use a lesser standard for safety than did LSA implying that LSA had made a mistake when using Caltrans corner sight distance standards. Your consultant suggested applying a private driveway standard instead. I have attached the Caltrans Handbook pages regarding sight distances. I hope that, after reading those pages, you might join me in questioning whether two road segments providing 250 to 300 vehicular entrances to, and exits from, an arterial carrying 15,000 trips a day (with 15% exceeding 40 MPH) should be considered equivalent to private driveways. Remember as well that these two segments will also be used by bicyclists and pedestrians. I believe that Piedmonters who use Moraga Avenue are entitled to an explanation from you as why you would even consider a lower standard of safety today than your predecessors choose in 2010. They adopted the LSA EIR only after it had been extensively vetted by city staff, traffic consultants hired by private citizens, and several attorneys representing both the city and private citizens. That document unlikely included mistaken safety standards. At the very least, you should invite LSA to defend their work. See attached.
3/1/2024	Patty Siskind	1). Yes, I agree with Conna McCarthy, the housing should be entirely integrated with high and low income units in the same building/location.(To prevent the feeling of a ghetto.) I also feel that the units should be 2 bedrooms or more in order to get families. A master developer should be used for all the projects (and more apt to negotiate cost of city amenities.). I also feel you should sell the land rather than lease so you have units which can be sold as condominiums. People are more likely to maintain the properties with skin in the game. 2). Yes, I think we should eliminate the skate park. 3). Please have them modify the nature trail to reflect a loop from the starting point near the corporate yard. As we discussed, there is no room for a trail head on Maxwellton (20' wide road) and the access point on Maxwellton is the gate owned by the cemetery. 4). Is the access to the two lots for sale on Maxwellton owned by Mt. View Cemetery? (There is a gate in place with signs saying this is private property) 5) The citizens of Piedmont have just approved taxes for the pool, and an increase in taxes to maintain services, such as security. The residents surrounding Moraga Canyon have a much greater impact as well. They will have to accept light pollution, noise pollution, traffic congestion, fire hazard and significant safety issues with line-of-site not meeting state standards. Do you really want to ask these people to pay more in taxes for this net effect? 6) I agree you should eliminate options 3 & 4. I'm in favor of Option #1 with the least additional costs. Negotiate with the developers to add a smaller field/dog park/playground next to the houses on the north side of Moraga Canyon and develop the skate park as an extension of the Corporate yard, soccer field or upscale housing(instead of the 2 houses on Maxwellton with unknown access). As suggested by Jennifer Long, this would be a hybrid of Option#1. The housing could be built immediately without additional Piedmont staff, (at the observation of Betsy Anderson for the lowest cost) with the benefit of a smaller field added, and the skate park area could be developed as the City felt best. Thanks to all, City Staff, Council members and Consultants. I know you have put a lot of time into this project.
3/1/2024	Tom Gandesbery	See attached written correspondence. Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/1/2024	Deborah Leland	Verbal comments at the City Council meeting.
3/1/2024	Ralph Catalano	Verbal comments at the City Council meeting.
3/1/2024	Marj Blackwell	Verbal comments at the City Council meeting.
3/1/2024	Andy Madeira	Verbal comments at the City Council meeting.
3/1/2024	Randy Wu	Verbal comments at the City Council meeting.
3/1/2024	Andy Hempeck	Verbal comments at the City Council meeting.
3/1/2024	Liz Lummis O'Neil	Verbal comments at the City Council meeting.
3/8/2024	Randy Wu, York Drive	Piedmont's role in the Bay Area's housing crisis and its reluctant compliance with RHNA. 1. Piedmont can and should be part of the solution to the housing shortage rather than relying on other East Bay cities stepping forward to build more affordable housing. The City has permitted plenty of ADUs suitable for single occupants and as a complement now needs to build larger homes especially for family households limited to affordable incomes. 2. The desire for mixed income or "integrated" housing may be best met by building affordable multi-family housing (MF) not only in Moraga Canyon but also in other areas of the City. The City Council should focus on getting this first MF project done. In my opinion the only feasible affordable housing site in this sixth cycle is in the Moraga Canyon area. Piedmont is well behind other cities in its adoption of MF programs; for this reason developers have more attractive opportunities in other cities with proven track records supporting MF development. 3. The Moraga Canyon specific area study identifies the key variables and trade-offs. The City has a thorough comparison of the four primary options and can with confidence pick the best path forward. While your choice may not be "something for everyone", you can reach a sound decision for the community based upon urban planning, schedule, financing and environmental impacts. Based on this study, you should issue a RFP as soon as possible and solicit proposals from developers for housing development. 4. You undoubtedly would like to have a broad consensus based upon a win-win-win. If there was a realistic option for timely construction of a MF project, an expanded soccer field and a modernized Corp Yard then that would be an easy choice. Unsurprisingly there are schedule trade-offs and significant financial costs for the MF project if other desired community projects are attached. In particular Piedmont's A-1 bond allocation may be jeopardized. This should be avoided. The MF project must be the first priority unencumbered by
3/11/2024	Irene Cheng and PREC: Andrea Ruiz-Esquide Elise Marie Collins Frances Fisher Randy Wu Deborah Leland Susy Struble Andy Madeira Alice Talcott Jessica Burke Sarah Karlinsky Carol Galante Jill Lindenbaum	See comment letter, attached.

3/12/2024	Deborah Leland	I am writing to provide additional input on the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan. I strongly believe that affordable housing is a key component of any vibrant community, and I am eager for its development in Piedmont. I attended the March 1 City Council workshop, however, and I was concerned that the City may be veering in the wrong direction to achieve this goal. First, I was alarmed by the lack of adherence to the key purpose of the Specific Plan, which is to enable housing construction in Moraga Canyon. Housing cannot be secondary, or contingent upon amenities. A group of us has submitted a letter emphasizing this point more thoroughly. Relatedly, the consulting team seems to have lost sight of the scope of services for preparation of the Specific Plan, which directs the consultants to provide: “Detailed guidance on phasing and subdivision that accommodates the 60 units of lower-income housing and 72 units of above moderate-income housing . . . and that prioritizes and expedites the identification of a site for the development of affordable housing that meets the criteria and timelines to secure Alameda County Measure A-1 funding” (emphasis added). This critical local subsidy allows an affordable housing development to be competitive in securing state and federal subsidies which in turn increase the capacity of the affordable housing development to cover the infrastructure costs related to that development. Given council members’ keen focus on impacts to the City’s General Fund, retaining Measure A-1 funding should be front of mind. The only chance that the City has to retain this valuable subsidy is to adopt a Specific Plan and promptly proceed with an RFQ to select a developer who can immediately obtain control of the designated affordable housing site. At the March 1 workshop, multiple council members seemed to favor Option 2. As an occupant of one of the 50 or so Piedmont homes on the north side of Moraga, I also appreciate the benefits of Option 2 from a land use and planning perspective. However, in its current form Option 2 does not meet either of the key criteria above, due to the \$5 million funding gap and the proposed phasing. Therefore, I would like to offer some ideas that could facilitate the phasing for Option 2 being reversed (i.e., to provide the developer control of the site designated for affordable housing immediately upon the City’s selection of its development partner). First, I would like to note that under Option 1 (or Options 3 or 4), if funds to improve Coaches Field were obtained and that project were to move forward, the existing softball and soccer fields would be out of service for the duration of that construction. Thus, there is nothing that mandates that replacement field space be completed (or even started) before housing construction could begin on the existing Coaches Field site. The Specific Plan could simply allow for each subsite of Option 2 to begin once funding for that subsite is secured. It will likely take about two years following site control for an affordable housing developer to be ready to start construction, and the City could work with the Piedmont community to raise funds for development of recreation facilities on the Blair Park site during that period. However, I recognize that turning over control of the existing fields before funding is secured for new fields could create fear among the community that those recreational facilities would be lost entirely. Therefore, I believe the City Council needs to be able to see its path forward to financial viability of the full plan if it is to proceed with this option. Here are some considerations to improve the financial feasibility of Option 2: ● Allow flexibility on the size of the playfield to be developed at Blair Park. The current Coaches Field has limited usefulness given its poor drainage, lack of lighting, and small soccer field, so creating a year-round playable turf field of comparable size at Blair Park would still be a huge benefit for the community. Furthermore, my recollection of the 2010 Blair Park proposal for a 300’ x 150’ playfield was that it seemed too big for the site, creating significant visual and grading impacts. (I think the same is likely true for a field of that size on the existing site, by the way.) The City could still hold on to the idea of a U14 field as a “wish list” item should additional funding become available. ● Allow flexibility in building types, density and height to increase the residual land value and maximize the value of land features on the north side of Moraga. Specifically, the skate park area offers spectacular views of the bay and easy pedestrian access to schools. The highest value use of this portion of the site could very well be lower density for-sale housing, and the Specific Plan should allow for this valuable area to be parceled off and sold for market rate homes at a density that maximizes the total land value. To offset that lower density housing, explore siting a taller structure where the site topography provides natural screening, such as the portion at the mouth of Red Rock Rd where Option 2 currently shows parking. ● Expand the developable land area at the mouth of Red Rock Road by slightly realigning Moraga Ave to the south, from where the steep hillside on the south side retreats to just below the driveway for 911 Moraga Ave. One commenter at the March 1 workshop introduced the idea of moving the entire Moraga Ave ROW to run along the southern edge of the Specific Plan area. While I don’t think this is practical given the two or three homes whose driveway access is via the north side of Moraga Ave between Red Rock Rd and Maxwellton, it seems possible at the western edge of the plan area, and could create a desirable site for a taller apartment building. If some combination of all these modifications to Option 2 result in a financially feasible plan, then the City could choose this option and allow a developer immediate site control of the designated affordable housing site. This is the only way that Option 2 would meet the primary objective of the Specific Plan and preserve the availability of the valuable Measure A-1 subsidy (if the City moves quickly). Otherwise, the City must either pledge City funds to cover the gap (which it seems disinclined to do), or select Option 1. Failure to do so would be a failure to adhere to the Housing Element’s purpose to enable housing. Thank you for your consideration,
3/18/2024	Ilene Sandler	Please listen to the people who live in Piedmont in the Moraga Canyon area. We do NOT want increased density in Moraga Canyon. And the idea of adding additional units in this area (from 132 to 199) is incredibly disrespectful to those of us who live in this area. There have been multiple requests from our neighbors to the city to not locate so much of the new housing in this narrow Moraga Canyon area. New housing should be spread throughout the city -- not just located in this corner of Piedmont. The density is dangerous and unwanted. And you are disregarding earlier city planners who provided parks for the city by considering the development of Blair Park. Please do not ignore us.
3/18/2024	Deborah Leland	Dear Mayor Cavanaugh, City Council members, staff and consultants, After reading the staff report, and seeing the direction the City seems to be heading, I need to provide further comment to amend the letter I submitted on March 12: ●The ideas I had offered about Option 2 were intended to provide the City with flexibility to compromise on the secondary (i.e. non-housing) goals of the Specific Plan to enable that Option. Instead, the direction proposed in the staff report doubles down on the market rate housing in order to continue to insist on the most extensive recreational uses. I think this would lead to too intensive use, problematic siting and over-development in Moraga Canyon. I do not support Option 2 at this intensity of use. I believe that the concept of flexibility that the staff report is endorsing takes the City in the wrong direction. Failure to select a site plan option is a bad idea: that approach will lead to confusion and a drawn out Specific Planning process, along with additional staff/consultant time and cost. The approach outlined in the staff report is also in clear contradiction with the direction in the Housing Element to create a Specific Plan that "prioritizes and expedites the identification of a site for the development of affordable housing that meets the criteria and timelines to secure Alameda County Measure A-1 funding." (emphasis added) The City should select Option 1. Given the City's unwillingness to compromise on having a U-14 soccer field, Option 1 is the only feasible way to proceed. This Option allows de-coupling the recreation improvements from the improvements necessary for housing and safety, so that the City can continue to follow the dream of having its U-14 field without derailing the entire Specific Planning effort.
3/18/2024	Randy Wu	See attached.
3/18/2024	Pam Hertzner	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Marj Blackwell	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Ralph Catalano	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Karen Harley	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Elise Collins	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Randy Wu	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Jill Lindenbaum	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Claire Parisa	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Carol Galante	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Rick Holliday	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Irene Cheng	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Sarah Karlinsky	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Alice Talcott	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Vincent Fisher	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
3/18/2024	Deborah Leland	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.

3/18/2024	Andy Madeira	Verbal comments made at the City Council meeting.
5/17/2024	Irene Cheng Carol Galante Ellen Greenberg Andy Madeira Sarah Karlinsky Randy Wu Jill Lindenbaum Elise Marie Collins Deborah Leland Andrea Ruiz-Esquide	See attached.
8/12/2024	Garrett Keating	In tonight's discussion of building designs for Moraga Canyon I hope you will inquire about the "net zero" capability of these designs: can they accommodate solar panels on the roofs, are they suitable for micro-gridding and batteries, is one design better or worse for passive solar heating and cooling. The Housing Element adds 7000 MT GHG to the city's 32,000 MT annual emissions so the carbon footprint of these designs should be a factor in what design is chosen.
8/12/2024	Irene Cheng	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
8/12/2024	Marjorie Blackwell	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
8/12/2024	Chris Read	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
8/12/2024	Ralph Catalano	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	Frank Nothaft	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	Pam Hirzer	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	Dimitri Maganis	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	George Hosgood	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	Randy Wu	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	Deborah Leland	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	Marjorie Blackwell	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	Claire Parisa	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
9/23/2024	Frances Fisher	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
10/7/2024	Ralph Catalano	Written comments submitted to City Council meeting.
10/13/2024	Jane Holland	Written comments submitted via email to the City Council.
10/14/2024	Dave Holland	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
10/14/2024	Randy Wu	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
10/14/2024	Liz Lummis O'Neil	Verbal comments made at Planning Commission meeting and reflected in meeting minutes.
10/14/2024	Ralph Catalano	Written comments submitted as late mail to the Planning Commission.
10/14/2024	Ralph Catalano	Verbal comments made during the open forum part of the Planning Commission meeting.
4/24/2025	(OpenGov.com)	This plan looks well thought out, and a good use of the open space in the area. Your neighbors just up the hill in Oakland are in full support of building more housing, and this project in particular.
4/24/2025	Monika McCaffrey (OpenGov.com)	How do you vision the increased traffic, especially at the intersection of Harbord Drive? Already at times it is impossible to enter Moraga from either side of Harbord Drive. Will there be a traffic light, or what will be happening at that intersection????? Good luck when wanting to going up on Moraga to get to 13 going in the morning, or coming back between 3 and 5..... Obviously Piedmont chose this site because it mostly only affects homeowners in Oakland negatively, but not at all Piedmont - just add more housing and cars on Moraga, since it will pretty much have no impact or hurt residents in Piedmont. Very smart on their site; wonder how that got approved!! Regards, Monika McCaffrey
4/28/2025	Any Madeira	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
4/28/2025	Ralp Catalano	Written materials submitted at the City Council study session.
4/28/2025	Anonymous (OpenGov.com)	I join neighbors in the concern that adding urban density and congestion to Moraga Canyon is a threat to an already challenging emergency evacuation route out of the neighborhood. Our neighbor Ken Koretz penned the following comments I post in the hope it will prompt our community to examine safer alternative sites for affordable housing and/or possibly seek a State exemption based on relevant safety factors. From Ken who has done some diligent traffic research: Within moments of a disaster, traffic from 8 cross streets, including Estates, Masonic, Harbord, Maxwellton, Pala, Monte, Mesa and Highland, will pour onto Moraga Ave, filling both lanes. 650 cars will fit. Countless others will not. We can also expect 88 cars from Moraga Ave driveways to join the exodus. If traffic moved smoothly in either direction, this might not be an issue. But Hwy 13 rush-hour drivers already know that it doesn't take much to create bottlenecks at the Moraga Ave /Thornhill Drive on-ramps. In a catastrophe, we'd also expect gridlock where Moraga Ave crosses Highland Ave and where it dead-ends at Grand Ave. While neighbors have practiced on-site emergency response, we've accepted a free-for-all at evacuation, trusting that we'd always have choices. That calculus must change. We just witnessed terrified Pacific Palisades and Altadena evacuees abandon trapped vehicles to flee. Apparently, few died in vehicles or on foot. We should be so lucky. When Montclair and Piedmont face an urban wildfire, Moraga Ave will become a two-lane parking lot in a canyon for at least 738 vehicles. First responders may have little or no access. This demands urgent, collective attention, regardless of the construction of Piedmont's affordable housing units. The proposed Moraga Canyon Specific Plan purportedly adds 200 new housing units, perhaps each with a car. Once built, drivers and passengers of 938-plus vehicles would be at even greater risk. We're called on to solve inconvenient problems. Adding affordable housing is a noble objective. Perhaps Piedmont and Oakland could cooperate by offering non-controversial Oakland properties to fulfill Piedmont's state mandate. Regardless, leaving adults, children, elderly and special needs residents, caregivers and tradespeople to make split second decisions to outrun an inferno is not a solution. Adding high density housing to this already fraught status is unimaginable and an unacceptable reflex to legislative compliance.
4/30/2025	Marjorie Blackwell	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
4/30/2025	Pam Hirtzer	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
4/30/2025	Kathleen Hurley	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.

4/30/2025	Dara Birnbaum	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
4/30/2025	Liz Lummis O'Neil	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
4/30/2025	Patty Siskind	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
4/30/2025	Garrett Keating	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
4/30/2025	Vivian Mather	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
4/30/2025	Peggy Esposito	Verbal comments made at City Council study session.
5/5/2025	Marjorie Blackwell	Email letter to City Council regarding traffic analysis including stopping sight distance with attachments.
5/7/2025	Anonymous (OpenGov.com)	I'm against the plan for these reasons: 1. It destroys our last open space & a wildlife habitat will be destroyed forever. 2. Safety reasons- in case of a disaster, fire or whatever, it will create a nightmare traffic problem.
5/8/2025	Lucy Gill	Email confirming consultation with Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation and acceptance of measures to protect tribal cultural resources.
6/3/2025	Kathleen Hurley	Email with comments regarding development concerns, including traffic safety.
6/4/2025	Kathleen Hurley	Verbal comments to Park Commission.
6/12/2025	M Marshall (OpenGov.com)	Has anyone considered the high risk added to potential wildfire evacuation that would be caused by adding multi tenant buildings to Moraga Ave? Seems irresponsible to even consider putting housing there. Not to mention the increased traffic when it's already dangerous.. why haven't other less dangerous and more public transit accessible spots been reviewed?
6/12/2025	Anonymous (OpenGov.com)	As a Piedmont resident that would be directly impacted by any construction on Moraga Canyon, I cannot in good conscience support this plan. I recognize that the City must add housing but these 2 proposed locations have so many more negatives than positives. Traffic will be ground to a standstill and unable to support the 200 units being considered. With adding dedicated bike lanes, it only reduces space for vehicles on the road. The plan to add bus stops on this road would only further drag traffic to a grind. With the planned Fire Drill this weekend, I can't imagine how damaging the construction of new apartment units on Moraga would be. The City moved on too fast from considerations of alternate locations such as Beach/Linda. There is existing access to transportation and bus lines in place there. Please don't ruin Moraga Canyon for all residents of Piedmont.
6/13/2025	Hari Titan (OPenGov.com)	California has several programs designed to support the development and accessibility of low-income, all-electric housing. These programs, like the Building Initiative for Low-Emissions Development (BUILD) and the California Electric Homes Program (CalEHP), offer financial incentives and technical assistance to developers and builders constructing new, all-electric homes for low-income residents. BUILD Program: This program, managed by the California Energy Commission (CEC), provides financial incentives and technical assistance to developers constructing new all-electric, low-income housing. https://www.energy.ca.gov/news/2024-10/new-federally-funded-residential-energy-rebate-programs-launching-california CalEHP: CalEHP, a sister program to BUILD, offers financial incentives and technical support to builders of new, all-electric homes for low-income residents. https://www.energy.ca.gov/news/2023-07/58-million-incentives-now-available-new-all-electric-climate-friendly-homes With an all-electric building, solar panels would have a very fast payback period. The building should include electric charging stations (Tesla and non-Tesla). These incentives would help mitigate the over 7000 Metric Tones of CO2 the project is projected to add to the city's GHG emissions as reported recently by Piedmont Connect. The City should also follow California building codes, particularly Chapter 7A and the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) code, that mandate fire-resistant materials and construction methods for new buildings in wildfire-prone areas. Things like Class A fire rated composite shingle roofing. Non-combustible or Ignition-Resistant Siding: Materials like fiber cement siding or stucco painted with Class A fire-resistant paint. Dual-pane windows with at least one pane of tempered glass, which is more resistant to heat-induced breakage. Fire-rated doors to slow fire spread. Roof vents listed as approved by the California State Fire Marshal for use in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Non-combustible decks and fences. Hardscaping like gravel, stone, or concrete in a 5-foot ember-resistant zone immediately around the building. Wider buffer zones and defensible spaces.
6/13/2025	Kenneth and Joyce Polse	Email with comments regarding traffic, safety, environmental impacts, cost, legacy, and other sites for development
6/16/2025	Alice Talcott	Email received 6/16/2025 regarding future development design and responsibility to construct
6/18/2025	Gabrielle Castriotta (OpenGov.com)	As a new resident of Piedmont, I have not had the opportunity to weigh in on the Moraga Canyon Plan previously, so I have several things to say. I hope my voice is heard, especially as our home borders on the site. To start off, I think Option B, with the bulk of housing going next to Coach's field, makes more sense than trying to squeeze so much into Blair Park. Any oaks removed from Blair Plark will need to be replaced in kind, no matter what. Therefore, my comments are addressing Option B. While I support more housing in Piedmont, especially affordable, I think this plan has some major issues that need to be resolved. First, the size and style of the housing development proposed does not match the site. It is too large, and the visuals provided appear too urban/corporate for the location. This style and scale of development would make sense at the vacant lot on Pleasant Valley and Broadway in Oakland, for example, but not tucked into the landscape in the midst of SF homes. I do support densification, especially if it allows Piedmont to maintain its precious green spaces while adding housing stock, but it needs to be at the right scale. 2-4 story townhomes might make more sense at this location. Additionally, I saw just one driveway connecting to Moraga only on the plan. For emergencies especially, it's imperative that any development maintains a second road out, ideally connecting to Harbord/Clarewood. If logistics must be worked out with the city of Oakland or even Mountain View Cemetery, please do so. This connection is also important for traffic mitigation on Moraga. On the topic of traffic on Moraga, if we are adding denser housing, we need the public transit to accompany it. Transit is mentioned in the plan but needs more study. This line should be implemented BEFORE the housing. Piedmont really needs a local bus route that connects to the Rockridge BART station as well as Montclair, Piedmont Ave, and Lakeshore Ave--essentially, connecting this town that is zoned almost exclusively residential to nearby goods and services. The 33 is not enough. A smaller electric shuttle (check out the Culver City Circulator in Southern California for a good example) could be a great and quieter option for navigating narrow and twisty Moraga Ave. Finally, while I love the idea of widening Moraga to create bike lanes and sidewalks, I would imagine these improvements to be extremely costly given the difficult topography of the site. I'd be all for them, but I do question their feasibility. It's so important for Piedmont to add housing where it makes sense, and I think this site (Option B, by Coach's Field) is a good choice given the right parameters. Just don't let overreach spoil the whole plan.
6/18/2025	Recreation Commission Speakers	See meeting video.
6/28/2025	Irene Cheng, Elise Collins Frances Fisher, Carol Galante, Sarah Karlinsky, Deborah Leland, Andy Madeira, Claire Parisa, Andrea Ruiz-Esquide, Alice Talcott, Randy Wu	Email received 6/28/2025, see attached.
7/7/2025	Ralph Catalano	City Council meeting July 7, 2025 comments and written submittal
8/8/2025	Jeffery Alpert	Email to Planning Commission regarding email received from Jane Pingatore sent August 8, 2025, forwarding Pingatore email.
8/7/2025	Marjorie Blackwell, Tim and Martha Holstlaw, Anita Stapen, Min Yang	Written letter, see attached.

8/11/2025	Winifred Walters	Verbal comments at the Planning Commission meeting.
8/9/2025	Winifred Walters	Email distributed at the dais. There are problems with this plan with regard to sidewalks and bike access for new and existing Piedmont residents, specifically in the section of street and sidewalk on Moraga Avenue just west of the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan area. Moraga Avenue is the only direct route between the proposed new housing development and schools in Piedmont, City Hall, etc. The narrow, curved section from Coaches Field, going west, to below Pala Avenue creates a bottleneck for realistic multi-modal access to the MCSP area. The video summary refers to “sidewalks on both sides” of Moraga Canyon. However, the main access from the rest of the City of Piedmont has a sidewalk on only one side, as it is today. See page 34, the section west of Coaches Field. The plan includes a “buffered bike lane uphill.” This is misleading because the buffered bike lane does not exist in the approach from the west (near Pala Ave) to the MCSP area. What is shown in the plan (page 37) is a Class III Bike Lane. A “Class III Bikeway” simply means that bikes and vehicles need to share the road. This particular section of road is both narrow and curved, with very limited visibility. I can’t imagine how this section, as proposed, can be safe for children and families travelling to and from Piedmont for school and recreation. The plan does not adequately address this issue with respect to the various considerations for Class III Bikeways. See: https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/design/documents/chp1000-a11y.pdf P. 38 discusses adding bus transit along Moraga Ave. This would make bicycling along that route even more dangerous. Bikes and buses along the very narrow section of this route will not be safe. I don’t believe the plan adequately addresses the possible combination of all of these modes of transportation. Winifred Walters
8/13/2025	David Petta	Written letter, see attached.
8/14/2025	Winifred Walters	Written letter, see attached.
8/21/2025	Evan Wong (OpenGov.com)	I do agree, the roads during commute hours are at capacity. The increase in traffic may seem "minor" but when you have 50 vehicles stopped on the road. You have to imagine the density this creates on a 1 lane, 2 way traffic road. A greater challenge is when/if a vehicle stops or stalls on Moraga Ave. First responders will not have access unless going through Pala Ave, and even this road has limitations. As Moraga Ave. is used primarily for commuters who utilize CA-13, not just city residents. It is not ideal nor realistic to have public transportation pass through here as the road narrows abruptly. As for public transportation specifically in the Moraga Canyon area, the system would not be heavily utilized as it would barely serve ~200 residents. Based on the design road plans it seems great in the canyon area, but this does not solve the future bottlenecking between Highland Ave, and Pala Ave. Eventually there will be bottlenecking at Red Rock rd. as well.
8/21/2025	Kathleen Hurley	I write in follow-up to the past council meeting where there was a noticeably large turnout for the presentation and topic of the Moraga Canyon development site specific plan. I am a resident of Harbord Drive, very close to and impacted by traffic and related policies on Moraga Avenue from Pleasant Valley Road up to the on-ramps of HWY 13 just two blocks north of my location and three to four blocks north of the proposed development plan. Because Moraga Ave serves as a major evacuation route from the area and crosses through the Piedmont/Oakland Border twice near this development proposal, a number of neighbors are inquiring how Moraga Avenue traffic will impact the surrounding community and intersections in regard to safe access, egress, emergency vehicles and response, pedestrian, bike and auto safety along the length of the corridor. As pointed out in the past, this plan is being developed in a box that doesn’t take into account the immediate community surrounding it. Every map in the Site Specific Plan put forth by the consultants stops at the Piedmont border without thought of impacts or how various improvements may be gained through mutual community cooperation. Councilmembers asked several excellent questions of the consultant and staff at the last meeting that I hope will be able to be followed up upon meaningfully. For example, the question was raised how to put a hard cap on the number of units to be developed so a developer doesn’t add more? The consultant answer to that question was that since Piedmont owns the property it will need to be placed into the developer agreement. If a vote were to be taken I believe this cap would be agreed as desirable yet there didn’t seem a way to secure a commitment that a cap would be placed. Is that something that can be taken up at a future meeting and/or noted as a request from council? Another Councilmember mentioned the past nearby conflagration and asked what emergency planning and measures were under study or included related to the development proposal. Some of the speakers and other councilmembers raised similar and related concerns including asking if there might be a second exit drive added to development on the Coaches Field side to help prevent bottlenecks. Will there be more follow-up for these issues related to emergency escape routes, plans for emergency vehicle staging and overall access? Are there specific guardrails that could be prepared and added to the development agreement without having to wait for the full agreement to be drafted? It makes sense to capture and act on issues deemed important so they are not lost to time or memory. If it is deemed premature or out of scope to work with the current contractors on important issues of community safety, is there a way to document and preserve those concerns to see them addressed for when the time seems appropriate. Even at one meeting two Councilmembers had a concern about a specific tree and were told it could not be taken care of in the plan. Yet, one might ask could that be part of the development agreement? It would be sad to see the talents and efforts of many thoughtful people lost due to asserted technicalities related to a consultant document. I hope the Council will continue to question and advocate for community safety, not just limited to the box on the site map, but to the greater good and safety of the surrounding population and community. In an area of earthquake faults, wildfire, challenging topography and a history of traffic difficulties, accidents and bottlenecks, thinking of and planning for what will happen when an area is under stress is incredibly important. I appreciate your continued thoughts in this direction.
8/21/2025	Anonymous (OpenGov.com)	Almost all of the people who live in the direct area that would be impacted by this addition of density are opposed to this plan. The roads are already at capacity and the density would put our lives at risk if there were a fire or other emergency. There were many deaths in the most recent wildfire in this area caused by traffic jams. Even on a normal day, the intersection at Maxwelton and Moraga is already very dangerous and difficult to navigate, as is our alternative intersection at Harbord and Moraga. Any additional traffic will cause more accidents and deaths. There is no public transportation in this neighborhood to mitigate any of the added traffic. It also would destroy beautiful open space and parks that house wildlife and make Piedmont the wonderful home that is it. Our family uses the park regularly and we observe numerous species of wildlife such as the bald eagles, coyotes, red tail hawks, mule deer, red foxes, and many species of smaller birds and rodents, turkeys, turkey vultures, opossums, and more. Their habitat would be destroyed as well as our ability to appreciate the beautiful natural setting of this public open space. Destroying public open space is really going in the wrong direction.
8/22/2025	Randy Wu	I have written and spoken before to the Planning Commission and City Council. For the new members of the Planning Commission, I am a longtime resident of Piedmont, and I believe the City must build more housing, both affordable and market rate. All other cities in Alameda County have built multifamily housing projects based upon their Housing Element plans. Piedmont should catch up and build its share as well in this housing cycle. I have some observations and recommendations on Circulation (Chapter 4). <u>Observations</u> - Moraga Ave. from the intersection at Highland Ave. to Estates Drive in Oakland has been for many drivers a quick freeway on-ramp to Highway 13 and a fast downhill ramp to Piedmont Ave. and downtown Oakland. For these drivers, the posted 25 MPH speed limit is not observed. Fehr & Peers has recorded speeds up to 40 MPH and a median speed of 35 MPH, both well above the speed limit. This section of Moraga Ave. (Highland to Estates) has about 100 lots. With the addition of 197 apartments the total number of homes and vehicles will increase. With this change Moraga Ave. no longer should be used as a drive-by getaway and instead should be designed as a residential street shared by drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed new signal light at Red Rock Road will slow traffic, but as drivers have been accustomed to driving at a high speed for decades it will take time to slow them down. (Note that Fehr & Peers believes that the new traffic light by itself will have a modest impact on high traffic speeds beyond the intersection.) <u>Recommendations</u> - The City should ensure that drivers comply with the posted speed limit through the following traffic safety measures: 1. The 25 MPH speed limit should be enforced by the Piedmont Police Dept. An officer should be stationed at times on Moraga Ave. to alert drivers that excessive speeding no longer will be tolerated. If necessary, traffic cameras and speed bumps could be installed to ensure that the median traffic speed is 25 MPH rather than 35 MPH. 2. The City should consider adding another crosswalk at the Red Rock Road intersection. This third "leg" of the intersection would slow traffic approaching the intersection in both directions as some drivers may try to "beat the light" if just a single crosswalk is installed on Moraga Ave. under the current design. The City also should consider, given the prospect of new families with children in the MCSP area, reducing the speed limit at this intersection to 15 MPH, the standard at our schools. 3. Bike and pedestrian paths should be upgraded within the limits of the available road space. The current plan for an upgraded bike lane headed uphill or east on Moraga Ave. is a thoughtful addition that will improve traffic safety for cyclists pedaling at a much slower speed than drivers in cars. The shared single lane headed downhill or west on Moraga Ave. will be safe for cyclists only if the 25 MPH speed limit is enforced. Sharing a single lane with cars speeding at 40 MPH is simply too dangerous for a cyclist. In conclusion, the MCSP will transform this area from a lightly used park by a drive-by corridor into a dense residential neighborhood. "Traffic calming" measures appropriate for a lively residential neighborhood should be the primary objective for the Planning Commission. Finally, Implementation (Chapter 10) does not yet include analysis of the fiscal impact of 199 new homes on the Piedmont School District. If just half of the new homes have families w/ 1-2 school age children, then the District will gain 100-200 new students. This gain would reverse declining enrollment and provide additional revenue for each enrolled student. The new housing would give teachers and other City workers an opportunity to live in Piedmont rather than commute from afar. It also might help the District recruit qualified teachers for Piedmont’s schools. Thank you very much for considering my comments and moving the MCSP forward in a thoughtful way. Randy Wu, York Drive
8/25/2025	Pam Hirtzer	Written letter, attached.
8/26/2025	David Petta	Written letter, attached.

8/27/2025	Alan Cohen (OpenGov.com)	In my opinion, the state legislature should not have viewed the solution to our housing shortage based on individual cities. A regional approach to this problem is for more rational. It is my understanding that no consideration was given to the available open space that each city has to accommodate new high density housing. In the case of our city Piedmont, the only available open sites are our very limited parks and recreational fields I think we should pursue having the state legislature have a carve out for cities, such as Piedmont ,where this is the case.we should not have to sacrifice our precious, open green space of which we have so little. Our city officials and the citizens of Piedmont need to contact our state legislators with regard to this issue. It’s obvious that in recent years have seen a tremendous number of residential housing units built in Oakland and Berkeley, San Leandro and Hayward El Cerrito in Richmond, which have the open space needed to accommodate this high density housing. Some people prefer living in a high density housing situation, I am not one of them, and I don’t think most people in Piedmont are either. Putting 160 units in Blair Park is an absolute abomination, this project will change the whole feel of the Morgen Canyon, it is an obscenity. This is a natural green corridor, should be preserved forever and not degraded in order to comply with a poorly thought out housing mandate from the state of California.This particular site gets very little natural sunlight. Moraga Avenue, of course is a major thoroughfare for emergency access and egress from the hills should there be another fire, this will be significantly will be significantly compromised . The coaches field location is at least a little bit more removed and we’ll have less of an impact on Canyon because of this it is also more expensive project which would make it less likely to ever be built. Again I think we need our city officials to pursue the idea of the carve out for cities that have no open space ,parks and green belts should be off limits. Loss of the little green space we still have in Piedmont will detract from our health and well-being immeasurably. Alan Cohen, Maxwelton Rd
9/1/2025	Winifred Walters	Written letter, attached.
9/3/2025	Marjorie Blackwell and Tom Brohard	Written letter from Tom Brohard, attached. Email content: Can you please forward this email from Civil & Traffic Engineer Tom Brohard to the Planning Commission. At my request, Mr. Brohard watched a portion of the 8/11/25 Planning Commission meeting, starting at 2 hrs. I watched the meeting segment – about 7 minutes starting at 2:00 and ending when they took a break. If they returned to discuss further, please let me know what time that starts, and I will watch. The presentation purportedly summarized speed data but I have not seen any recent speed measurements or any memos by the City’s consultant Fehr & Peers. Please provide those documents to me if you have them available. One of the slides showed an 85th% speed of 38-39 mph, and from that they used 40 mph as the design speed. The design speed should be at a higher speed since the goal is to design for traffic safety so that only 1 out of 20 drivers would be above the 95th%. Assuming 40 mph as the design speed puts 15% of the traffic above the design speed, which is not safe and not appropriate Incorrectly using 40 mph as the design speed puts 15% of the traffic above 40 mph, and 85% of the traffic at the design speed or less. Stopping sight distance is an appropriate consideration as is corner sight distance. The authority used by Caltrans and local jurisdictions in California is “A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets” published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Stopping sight distance is longer for downhill than for uphill. Here, 50 mph is the design speed as it represents the 95th% speed. From Table 3-1 enclosed, the stopping sight distance on level roadways for a design speed of 50 mph is 425 feet, and 305 feet for 40 mph. From Table 3-2 enclosed, the stopping sight distance on grades for a 6 % downgrade at 40 mph design speed is 333 feet and 474 feet for 50 mph. The downhill stopping sight distance for a design speed of 40 mph on Moraga Canyon Road is not adequate in advance of the proposed traffic signal at Red Rock Road. The associated stopping sight distance is less than adequate to provide safe conditions for a 50-mph design speed. From my review of Google Earth photographs, the horizontal curve to the right for downhill traffic is limited by embankments, trees, and foliage on the inside of this curve just north of Red Rock Road. The proposed measures to provide an advance flashing beacon with warning sign are incomplete by themselves. Total mitigation to provide adequate stopping sight distance will require regrading of the slope inside the horizontal curve to eliminate the stopping sight distance restriction and provide proper visibility of the traffic signal indications themselves. Please contact me with any questions regarding these comments. Respectfully submitted, Tom Brohard, Principal, Tom Brohard and Associates, 81905 Mountain View Lane, La Quinta, California 92253-7611, (760) 398-8885, Tbrohard0@gmail.com
9/3/2025	Justin Magana (OpenGov.com)	I have read the Specific Plan and the EIR addendum. No where in either of these documents do they take traffic seriously. There is no real study of the impact of either adding a stoplight nor 199 units along this road which I use everyday. The city is either unserious about this type of study or they do not want the public to see an actual study. Many of the comments here echo each other on the problems increase traffic would cause on Moraga Avenue and I agree with each one.
9/3/2025	Todd Williams, Fennemore Law Firm	Written letter, attached.
9/4/2025	Jeff Hoffman, Email and OpenGov.com	Written letter, attached. Email content: Please accept the attached comment letter for inclusion in the record for the September 8, 2025 Planning Commission hearing on the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan I’m a Piedmont resident at Echo Lane. My letter conveys overall support for adding housing but opposes the Blair Park (south-side) option on traffic / safety, community integration, and open-space / livability grounds. Kindly confirm receipt and that this will be included in the packet / record. Thank you for your time and service.
9/4/2025	David Rehnstrom, EBMUD	Written letter, attached. Email content: East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan (MCSP) and Addendum to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Piedmont Housing Element (2023-2031) located in the City of Piedmont (City). EBMUD commented on the Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR for the Piedmont Housing Element (2023-2031) on December 12, 2023. EBMUD’s original comments (see Attachment A of the response letter) still apply regarding water service, wastewater planning, and water conservation. Please see attached document for EBMUD’s additional comments. If you have any questions concerning this response, please contact Sandra Mulhauser, Senior Civil Engineer, Major Facilities Planning Section at (510) 287-7032.
9/4/2025	Anne Gritzer	I am writing to object to the city’s apparent intention to install field lights on Coaches Field. The Moraga Canyon Specific Plan (“MCSP”), published on the city’s website, provides a very thorough and well developed plan for proposed housing on city property located in

9/4/2025	Todd Kaiser, Email and OpenGov.com	I support the City of Piedmont’s commitment to increasing housing supply and expanding opportunities for low-income and working families in our community. These values are essential to creating a more inclusive, resilient city. However, I urge the Council and Planning Commission to reconsider Blair Park as a proposed development site under the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan (MCSP). The location poses serious safety, accessibility, environmental, and equity issues that directly conflict with the intent of our General Plan and the stated goals of the MCSP itself. 1. Unsafe Traffic Conditions at Maxwellton Road - Every day, residents exiting Maxwellton Road onto Moraga Avenue face hazardous conditions. There is no traffic signal or proposed improvement at this intersection, despite the MCSP’s promise to use a “complete streets” approach. The sharp curvature of Moraga Avenue and the speed of vehicles severely limit visibility, making turns unsafe even under current traffic volumes. The plan acknowledges widening Moraga Avenue but explicitly says it will not add lanes, meaning congestion and dangerous turning movements will remain. Adding hundreds of new housing units will drastically worsen these risks. I invite every decision-maker to attempt this turn during peak commute hours before concluding Blair Park is a viable housing site. 2. Lack of Safe School Access - The MCSP envisions affordable housing that will welcome families with children, a goal I fully endorse. However, Piedmont does not provide school bus service. Children living at Blair Park would be forced to walk over a mile along Moraga Avenue, a high-speed arterial road, often in rain, fog, or glaring sun. Crossings are only proposed at Red Rock Road. People will jaywalk across Moraga Avenue seeking desired paths. Meanwhile, pedestrian and trail system improvements described in the plan, such as hillside loops around Coaches Field, are recreational amenities rather than functional routes to schools or city services. 3. Inadequate Parking and Spillover into Neighborhoods - The plan underestimates vehicle demand. In a region with extremely high living costs, units will be occupied by more people than the design intends for, each with their own car. The MCSP allows reduced parking ratios under state density bonus law, but it provides no realistic solution for overflow. Already, the Maxwellton neighborhood struggles with illegal parking in fire lanes, restricting emergency vehicle access. Adding hundreds of units at either site without adequate parking guarantees worsening congestion, unsafe blockages, and further strain on surrounding neighborhoods. This is a serious blindspot of the MCSP. The plan assumes AC Transit could one day add stops along Moraga Avenue, but this is speculative and unfunded. Families may have to wait years before reliable transit serves the site and it will not lead to a meaningful reduction in the number of vehicles in the zone. 4. No Credible Wildfire Evacuation Strategy - The MCSP itself acknowledges wildfire risk with an evacuation routes diagram, but it provides no detailed traffic modeling or capacity analysis. During a wildfire, residents from the Oakland Hills and Upper Rockridge will also be funneled through Moraga Canyon. Traffic is already gridlocked during rush hour. Adding hundreds of residents at either site, with no secondary evacuation route, poses a grave risk to public safety. 5. Loss of One of Piedmont’s Last Open Spaces - The General Plan emphasizes protection of environmentally sensitive open space as a defining feature of Piedmont’s character. Yet the MCSP frames Blair Park as simply “developable,” treating it like an interchangeable land bank. Natural open spaces like Blair Park provide ecosystem services that buildings cannot replace: they reduce stormwater runoff, improve air quality, and cool urban heat. Once developed, those benefits are permanently lost. This is also a public health and equity issue. Locating low-income housing on Blair Park removes residents’ immediate access to the recreation and mental health benefits tied to greenery. Instead of enhancing Blair Park as an inclusive natural space for all, the plan would erase it for those who most need it. 6. A Better Path Forward - The City has set an ambitious housing target, and rightly so. But good planning means choosing sites that match the needs of future residents with the infrastructure and safety conditions to support them. Coaches Field and other sites north of Moraga Avenue already include plans for recreation upgrades and have safer, more direct connections into the city core. If the goal is equity, we should not place low-income families in a location that isolates them, exposes them to daily traffic dangers, and undermines emergency safety. The Moraga Canyon Specific Plan represents an important step toward a more inclusive Piedmont. But Blair Park is the wrong site. It sacrifices safety, equity, and open space values for a plan that is not realistic about traffic, parking, or evacuation. I urge the Council to remove Blair Park from the development area, and instead focus new housing on sites where residents, especially children, can live safely, access schools and services fairly, and still benefit from the open space that makes Piedmont unique.
9/8/2025	Vincent Fisher	Email regarding lighting, attached.
9/8/2025	Peggy Esposito	Email regarding liability, attached.
9/5/2025	Ilene Sandler and Eric Loucks	Email regarding traffic and wildlife habitat, attached.
9/8/2025	Deepti Sethi	Email regarding safety measures, attached.
9/8/2025	Rob Schenk	Email regarding safety, attached.
9/4/2025	Marj Blackwell, Vincent Fisher, Julie Watters, Daphne Albert, Peggy Esposito	This Opinion piece was partially printed in the Piedmont POST on 9/3/25. We thought you would like to read it in its entirety. On Sept. 8, 2025, Piedmont Planning Commission is scheduled to vote on a recommendation to the City Council on the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan (MCSP). The MCSP calls for building 197 housing units on Moraga Ave. (either in Blair Park or on the steep hillside above and around Coaches Field) The housing would be 5-storyu structures with 60 low-income and up to 137 market rate units. Some of us who have followed the Plan’s development for 3 years have questions and serious concerns for Piedmont’s future if it becomes reality. Here are a few. Disaster Evacuation: Piedmont Fire Dept. cites Moraga Canyon as a “high risk wildfire” area and predicts a wildfire is “highly likely.” The Canyon is also less than 1 mile from the Hayward Fault. Moraga Ave. is a designated emergency evacuation route and the only way out for the estimated 400 to 1,000 new Canyon residents, as well as for many existing nearby Oakland and Piedmont residents. The Plan expects people to walk or bicycle in a disaster. How likely is that? How will emergency crews reach the Canyon if Moraga Ave. is gridlocked as residents desperately try to leave? Remember the 1991 Oakland hills fire. Does Piedmont want to risk its residents’ lives? Traffic/Pedestrian Safety: Moraga Ave. is a busy, 24-hour traffic arterial, with 11,000 cars per day traveling an average 40 mph. The MCSP proposes a traffic light with a pedestrian crossing at Red Rock Rd. The City’s traffic consultants say the “safe stopping distance” required for cars traveling 40-mph meets Caltrans regulations for a traffic light. But a CA licensed civil & traffic engineer retained by Friends of Moraga Canyon says the safe stopping distance should be calculated for cars traveling 50 mph, meaning Moraga Ave. likely does not have the required stopping distance for a traffic light. If housing is built in Blair Park, the Plan specifies several driveways off of Moraga, creating even more risk and chaos for cars making left turns to enter or exit the project. Children would be tempted to dash across Moraga without waiting for a green light. Is Piedmont willing to risk serious accidents and children’s lives? Financial Risks: The MCSP requires the market-rate developer to pay all infrastructure costs, including widening Moraga Ave., adding sidewalks and bike lanes, new stormwater drains and sewer lines, undergrounding all utilities – and expanding Coaches Field. What if the developer declines or defaults partway through development? Does this cost fall on the City and Piedmont taxpayers? Will new residents be able to get fire insurance? Developing the Coaches Field side also requires moving the Corporation Yard to Blair Park Community Connection: The MCSP creates an “island community” with no improvements on Moraga Ave. beyond the plan boundaries. No consideration of traffic backups to Hwy 13 or to the sharp curves on Moraga adjacent to Pala Ave., which are already dangerous for bicyclists. The Plan makes no mention of what happens to daily traffic on Moraga Ave. during years of construction? How will Piedmont residents get to Hwy 13 and Montclair? Public Transit: The MCSP calls for a bus line on Moraga Ave to serve MCSP residents. How likely is AC Transit to add new bus service when it has cut nearly all service in Piedmont? Where exactly would the bus go? State law requires affordable housing be within .5 mile of public transit. It’s .7 mile from Red Rock Rd. to the closest bus stop on Highland Ave. School Children: Rather than let young children walk .7 mile to Havens School on busy Moraga Ave., isn’t it likely parents will drive them, creating more congestion during school drop-off and pick-up times? Known Obstacles: The Plan, itself, acknowledges constraints to the development, stating that hydrology “could cause dangerous road conditions on Moraga Ave. during significant rain and cause local flooding.” Stormwater storage basins at both site options may have to be replaced. AND “due to the presence of steep slopes (above Coaches Field), much of this land is not conducive to development.” The City wants to declare Blair Park -- a designated Piedmont City park -- “surplus land” in order to develop it. But CA State law says that declaring a city park surplus land can only be done for specific reasons. The las does not mention for market rate housing. What is Plan B? State housing law requires cities to look at alternate sites. What other sites is Piedmont examining? City planners say developers want at least 1/2 acre, which narrows the choices. But the law does allow smaller sites under certain conditions. Wouldn’t it be better for current and future Piedmont residents to spread new housing to existing neighborhoods, closer to schools and transit? Newcomers would feel more a part of the community and need fewer cars. Other potential sites: The City’s original plan was to build housing on the Corey Reich tennis courts and rebuild the courts on top. The Council rejected this plan, and the City switched to building 132 units Moraga Canyon. With no analysis of the capacity, the Council increased the number to 199, mainly to entice a developer to pay for expanding Coaches Field. Other potential smaller, neighborhood sites: Linda Beach Park; two tennis courts adjacent to the Community Center; the flat canyon area of Dracena Park; the empty EBMUD reservoir at the top of Blair Ave. Bottom Line: Adding State mandated 587 new housing units in Piedmont is a massive challenge, and our City officials have a monumental task in deciding what to do. They must weigh carefully how they think Piedmont should grow. Should new housing be on the outskirts of town or integrated into neighborhoods? Is Moraga Canyon a safe, buildable site for 197 housing units? Is the MCSP a financially viable choice for Piedmont? Signed: Friends of Moraga Canyon Board of Directors, Marj Blackwell, Vincent Fisher, Julie Watters, Daphne Albert, Peggy Esposito
9/8/2025	Vivien Mabur	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to fatalities during Oakland Hills Fire
9/8/2025	Kathleen Hurley	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to panic during fire evacuations.

9/8/2025	Ellen Greenberg	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References discretionary design process after DA adoption
9/8/2025	Todd Kaiser	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to parking standards ("2 spaces per units") and fit. Cars will park illegally causing obstructions to emergency response
9/8/2025	Alice Talcott	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References developer obligations in section 9, pages 94, 98, 10, and 104. "Developer will pay.'
9/8/2025	Andy Madeira	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. Design standars and developer requirements that are feasible (legally required to be feasible)
9/8/2025	Jill Lindenbaum	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References test fit and setbacks / stepbacks in development standards. Feasibility
9/8/2025	Don Chandler	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References need for new essential emergency services building and sufficient land to construct
9/8/2025	Liz Lummis O'Neill	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium.
9/8/2025	Gregory Ross	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to panic during fire evacuations.
9/8/2025	Irene Cheng	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to window recess, stepback above 4 stories.
9/8/2025	Randy Wu	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References that vehicle speeds make Moraga Avenue unsafe and need to reduce vehicle speeds
9/8/2025	Frances Fisher	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References unsafe vehicle speeds, need to encourage law enforcement and safe design, and make MCSP financially feasible
9/8/2025	Patricia Knudson	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References impacts to aesthetics, property values, quality of life, traffic light delays
9/8/2025	Xuemei Wang	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References two car accidents.
9/8/2025	Andrea Stark	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. Opposes the MCSP.
9/8/2025	Deborah Leland	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to Maxwelton Road intersection. Need to create traffic breaks to let cars onto Maxwelton Road
9/8/2025	Deepthi Sethi	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to wildfire evacuations, fire trucks can't turnaround on MEAN streets
9/8/2025	Mike Kroltz	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to traffic and dangerous for kids.
9/8/2025	Claire Parisa	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References need to reduce design standards, obligation on developers to provide infrastructure, create parking restrictions to protect existing residents, plan for Harbord Road intersection improvements
9/8/2025	Elise Collins	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References benefits of more housing in Piedmont for schools, caregivers, etc
9/8/2025	Justin Zucker	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to need to reduce vehicle speeds and that current Codes create safe environment
9/8/2025	Marjorie Blackwell	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to construction-related traffic issues, setting discourages pedestrian travel, and accuracy of 2023 traffic study, congestion
9/8/2025	Silver	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to Hayward fault line, coordination with City of Oakland, feasibility of 199 units on land in Moraga Canyon
9/8/2025	Tom O'Neill	Verbal comments during the public hearing made at the podium. References to consider smaller scale development in Moraga Canyon and expense to current residents
9/17/2025	Jane Holland	I am responding to today's article (09/17) in the Piedmont Post: Planning Commission moves forward with Moraga Canyon Housing recommendation. A comment made by Fire Captain Mike Carlisle that the Specific Plan makes it safer from fires because of the street widening and controlled intersections." It is RIDICULOUS to think that widening a small part of Moraga Av around Blair Park will make it SAFER; the road begins and ends in Oakland and it is 2 lanes on both ends! They have mentioned a "third lane", which would actually be the bike lane which bikers and pedestrians would use to flee! How is that SAFER?? Stopping Sight Distance (SSD) was determined by Caltrans in 2010 for the proposed soccer fields development to be unsafe to create a crosswalk; how is it safer now? Moraga Av is a very narrow, curving street with many chokepoints which make it impossible to clearly see pedestrians crossing the road; an emergency evacuation would be catastrophic as all emergency vehicles would be using the same 2 lanes as the fleeing cars from Oakland and Piedmont. We Oaklanders have been kept in the dark thruout the process and we are affected more than anyone. THIS IS NOT SAFE! Yours, Jane Holland
9/30/2025	Ralph Catalano	Written comments, see attached.
9/29/2025	Alan Cohen	Written comments, see attached.
9/26/2025	Elinor Barron, Janet Chin	The City of Piedmont Planning Commission unanimously approved a proposed new housing development project on Moraga Avenue in Moraga Canyon. This development will have a major impact on the City of Oakland and its residents. We are opposed to this project as it puts Oakland hills residents at risk in emergencies. The development project will add approximately 199 units near Blair Park-Coaches' Field immediately west of Maxwelton Rd (Piedmont) and Harbord Ave (Oakland). The project will bring several hundred residents and their cars to Moraga Avenue and will entail infrastructure changes as well (such as traffic control, sidewalks). Moraga Avenue directly connects Oakland's north hills with its downtown, traversing through part of Piedmont in Moraga Canyon. Piedmont's portion bisects Moraga Avenue into two Oakland segments. It is a major thoroughfare to and from Highway 13 and is a busy corridor with 24-hour traffic and approximately 11,000 cars per day. The Piedmont Fire Department has deemed Moraga Ave. as an emergency evacuation route. The PFD cites Moraga Canyon as a "high risk wildfire" area and predicts a wildfire is "highly likely." The City of Piedmont is noticeably absent from the East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments (EBWCG). We trust that the City of Oakland's leadership is aware of the proposed project and in discussion with the City of Piedmont. The proposal goes to Piedmont City Council very soon. We strongly urge the City of Oakland to oppose Piedmont City Council's approval to proceed with this project. Elinor Barron, Janet Chin, Snake Rd, Oakland, 94611 Sent to: Mayor Barbara Lee, cityclerk@oaklandca.gov; City Councilmember Janani Ramachandran, jramachandran@oaklandca.gov, JSmith@oaklandca.gov; Oakland Fire Chief, Chief Damon Covington, dcovington@oaklandca.gov; Oakland Emergency Services, Veronica Cole and Olga Crowe, OCrowe@oaklandca.gov, emergencyplanning@oaklandca.gov; East Bay Wildfire Coalition of Governments, John Gioia, John.Gioia@bos.cccounty.us; Piedmont City Council. Mayor Betsy Smegal Andersen, BAndersen@piedmont.ca.gov; Oakland Firesafe Council, outreach@oaklandfiresafecouncil.org; Elizabeth Stage, Chair OFSC, stage@berkeley.edu; Dr. Louise Comfort, lcomfort@berkeley.edu
9/28/2025	Ali Goss	My name is Ali Goss, and I live at ____ Moraga Avenue, just down the street from the proposed development site. I am writing to express my strong opposition to the scale and location of the planned apartment complex under the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan. I want to be clear that I am not opposed to the development of affordable housing. However, placing such a dense project—nearly 200 units—on a narrow, high-risk, high-traffic corridor like Moraga Avenue is deeply concerning for several critical reasons: 1. Safety and Emergency Evacuation: Moraga Avenue is a designated emergency evacuation route for both Piedmont and Oakland. This route is already heavily congested during rush hour and even more so when Highway 13 is backed up. The idea of funneling hundreds of additional residents through this corridor during an emergency—especially in a fire-prone canyon—is irresponsible. As recent tragedies in Paradise and the Oakland Hills Firestorm of 1991 have taught us, seconds matter during evacuations. This project puts current and future residents at unnecessary risk. 2. Traffic and Infrastructure Strain: Even now, the Harbord/Moraga intersection struggles with capacity—traffic frequently backs up to Masonic Avenue. Adding hundreds of new units without a clear and effective traffic mitigation plan, including a dedicated left-turn lane and proper traffic flow management, will only worsen the situation. There are currently no safe pedestrian crossings and no continuous sidewalks, making this stretch unsafe for current residents, let alone future ones. At my address we have had quite a few car accidents over the years due to the current traffic / road conditions. 3. Fire Risk and Insurance Concerns: Moraga Canyon is officially designated a high fire-risk zone. Insurance companies already limit coverage or significantly raise premiums for homeowners in this area. Adding hundreds of units in this fire-prone canyon will not only increase risk but could also further jeopardize homeowners' access to affordable and comprehensive fire insurance coverage. I myself have been dropped and am already paying more than 2-3x for the California FAIR plan. 4. Site Unsuitability: Blair Park is a narrow strip of land unsuitable for high-density residential development. There is limited access, no existing residential infrastructure, and serious concerns about stability and environmental impact. This location is simply not appropriate for any type of housing, especially not high-density construction. 5. Unrealistic Growth Projections: The projection of 587 new units by 2031 raises serious questions. How does the city plan to responsibly and sustainably accommodate such growth—especially when the most basic safety and infrastructure needs for this initial 197-unit proposal have yet to be addressed? Alternative Solutions: Other potential housing sites should be explored more thoroughly. These include: Consolidating underutilized school properties to free up land, Acquiring and responsibly repurposing larger parcels such as Tyson Lake, Supporting infill development within already established urban areas rather than attempting to force dense development into a narrow, fire-prone canyon. In summary, while I support the goal of increasing affordable housing, this particular plan fails to take into account the basic safety, infrastructure, and environmental limitations of the proposed site. I urge the Planning Commission to reconsider this plan and explore more appropriate alternatives. Thank you for your attention and for taking the time to listen to residents who will be directly impacted by these decisions. Sincerely, Ali Goss, Moraga Avenue
9/29/2025	Marj Blackwell	Written comments, see attached.

10/1/2025	Anne Berkey	I am a survivor of the ‘91 Oakland firestorm and our family used Moraga Ave to escape the conflagration. We lived then and have subsequently rebuilt our home on Proctor Ave between Moraga and Broadway Terrace. On Oct 20, 1991, Broadway Terrace was blocked off with fire equipment, the Warren Freeway was gridlock with traffic and the fire was active on #24. My husband and I loaded our 2 small children into our cars and decided our only direct way out was down Moraga Ave. We were able to escape before the fire expanded to and destroyed our home and most of the houses on our street. This month our homeowners insurance company has rated our zip code as “extreme wild fire danger” and has raised our premiums accordingly. Moraga Ave in Oakland is part of that same extreme fire danger rating. If you authorize the construction of dense housing in the Blair Park area, you are potentially threatening the lives of all of us who live above Blair Park. God forbid we should have another firestorm like that in Oct ‘91. It could be a major earthquake, given recent rumblings on the Hayward Fault. Please do not create additional dense housing along Moraga canyon that could add to the likely gridlock that would ensue in a disaster. I recognize that housing is needed and a priority everywhere, but this proposal would result in an unsafe area that could pose a significant danger to untold numbers of people. Traffic on Moraga on a “normal” day is already high; additional housing would exacerbate the problem, especially if Moraga is needed as an emergency evacuation route. Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. Ann Richardson Berkey, Proctor Ave, Oakland CA
10/2/2025	Lisa Kaplan	Written comments, see attached.
10/2/2025	Jane Pingatore Holland	I am Jane Holland and I live in Oakland. I am opposed to the sheer scale of 197 units being installed in our steep-sided high fire zone Moraga Canyon. Moraga is a 2 lane road and always will be no matter how you doctor up the diagrams. It is a very heavily travelled roadway (11,000+ cars daily) which begins and ends in Oakland and this project affects us Oaklanders profoundly. It is a major evacuation route for both Piedmont and Oakland. We are extremely concerned about the safety aspects of disaster evacuation with hundreds of added cars thrown into the mix with the existing hundreds trying to escape on a 2 lane road, with bikers and pedestrians using the bike lane to also escape. Your fire Captain suggested that a “third lane” for cars could somehow be created in the bike lane which defies imagination. Those using the bike lane would be sitting ducks. A retired Oakland Fireman told us that you would depend on OFD heavily to help your small fire dept but how on earth would they get into Piedmont on that narrow 2 lane road with everyone fleeing in a panic? This is not safe. Please rethink your locations for this housing which we realize is much needed. At least scale back down to 133 units, your original number (how did that get increased?). And where on earth will you put that many parking spaces (400 not including visitor parking?) And your driveways did not pass the 2010 CalTrans LOS (Line of Sight) test for the proposed but defeated soccer fields plan, why would they now??? This plan is beset with problems and it is hard to imagine new residents getting insurance as many in the area have had their insurance dropped b/c of fire/earthquake hazards and being next to the Hayward fault. Also children crossing Moraga Ave to go to school, or Coaches Athletic field are endangered by the hi volume speeding (40 MPH average in 25 MPH zone) traffic with poor LOS for the stoplight you are proposing. A traffic island has been described by some experts as more dangerous than not having one because people get over confident when caught on one; it is also very small in your design, very close to the whizzing cars. Also Blair Park is a wildlife corridor. This is not a safe project. Please reconsider. Sincerely Jane Pingatore Holland PS We have places some yard signs reflecting what the proposed units might look like and they are being stolen from Oakland private property which does not reflect well on our “opponents” from a free speech standpoint. A sensitive topic these days.
10/2/2025	Liz Lummis O'Neil, Mary and Arnie Levine, Laura and Keith Dierks	Written comments, see attached.
10/2/2025	David Petta	Having worked for 50 years in the East Bay as an architect and planner I am sure that very few of you understand very much at all of the technical analysis in the Specific Plan; I know that I still do not. To get a more intuitive, even visceral understanding of what is being proposed I would like to suggest that you take a 30-minute stroll up and down Moraga Avenue. You don’t even have to go at rush hour, just mid-morning would be good enough. It is scary to experience the breeze of the cars zipping past; how narrow the Blair Park strip really is and how the 6-story buildings will be jammed between the south canyon wall and the street; and what the “choke point” at Red Rock and the rest of the tarp-covered landslides on the canyon’s north wall feel like close-up. If you have more time, you might also be interested in a full scale mock-up of traffic congestion along Lincoln Avenue at Head Royce School. The drop-off population there is more or less equivalent to what the 197 new units will generate on Moraga. There, another 2-lane road is jammed with two brand new short left turn lanes, three stop lights in quick succession, and a host of about 12 yellow-vested traffic marshals waving arms to direct the traffic on Lincoln and keep them from finding alternative routes through the neighborhoods. It seems to have gone fairly smoothly so far, but in an emergency on Moraga we won’t have those yellow vests; what we will have is emergency vehicles, a free-for-all and sheer terror. David Petta, Architect____ Harbord Drive, Oakland
10/2/2025	Sandy Chang Edgar and Steven Edgar	Written comments, see attached. Two versions emailed together.
10/2/2025	Patty Siskind (Open Gov and Email)	Written comments, see attached.
10/2/2025	Vivien Mather	I, as are my neighbors, extremely worried about the proposal to build 197+ homes along a short, narrow, winding section of Moraga Avenue at Blair Park and/or across the street by Coaches Field. Let me be clear, we are not opposed to lower income (your term at the moment) housing. There’s a desperate need. But, this is the wrong place to build. This is a terrifying prospect if and when we have an emergency such as a fire or earthquake. The road is a designated emergency evacuation route for all the residents in the area, both in Piedmont and Oakland. As much as your nice fire chief video tries to assuage the residents that everything will be just fine in an emergency, we all know that this text book response does not bear any resemblance to the panic and ensuing chaos that will occur when people realize they cannot exit via the canyon. The police and firefighters will not be able to access the area and the potential loss of life is seriously real. And you know that the insurance companies will be aware of the devastating effects this development will have. A whole neighborhood could loose insurance coverage or the premiums will be so high that residents will move and the whole neighborhood fabric will fall apart. And, the people, if they buy these new residences, will struggle to get insurance too. Aside from the potential for a catastrophic disaster, the traffic on Moraga Avenue is already at capacity and beyond and for anyone trying to access the road from side streets will, in frustration, take unnecessary risks to get out on to the street. Pedestrians already have a massive challenge crossing the road. I, for one, have almost been hit several times, even though where I cross, the line of sight is good. They’re in such a hurry, and speeding, and routinely ignore pedestrians on crosswalks. The line of sight at Red Rock is dangerously short and there’s no doubt as a pedestrian there will accidents, and, god forbid, fatalities. The whole project is irresponsible, dangerous and potentially catastrophic. And with no consideration for the people who live in the surrounding neighborhoods. Vivien Mather, Masonic Avenue, Oakland. Sent from my iPhone
10/2/2025	Andrea Stark, Richard Stark, Ysella Stark	To: Piedmont Planning Commission, Re: Moraga Canyon Specific Site Plan, Date: October 1,2025, My name is Andrea Stark and I live at ____Moraga Ave with my parents Richard and Ysella Stark. We have lived here for about 50 years. I am writing to communicate our very strong opposition to the 197 living units that are proposed for Blair Park. Safety is of top concern. To put about 591 adults and children in danger by building in a known critical fire zone and earthquake fault line is inconceivable. The 591 does not even include all the residents that live in the surrounding area that will have increased danger. Moraga Ave is the way in and the way out. On regular days the traffic is quite heavy and any delay can cause a backup. If the power goes out on Moraga Ave there pretty much is no cell service so communicating is difficult. When panic sets in and many people are trying to evacuate at the same time it is not smooth like a planned protocol on a sheet of paper. This is not just evacuation for the development. It is for everyone. There just is not enough space to get everyone out. Aside from the very important emergency faults of this development plan there are other issues. This development will cause increased traffic on Moraga Ave. The study that was done was in 2020 (per the video that was sent out). This is 5 years later when commuting has increased. I travel on this road everyday. I am encountering back ups on my way home that start at the Highland/ Moraga stoplight. This back up sometimes goes past the cross street Ramona down towards Pleasant Valley. All these idling cars bring more noise and air pollution to the area. Blair Park provides cooling for the area especially on hot days. With climate change this should be something that is important. Yes, housing is something that is needed but putting so many people’s lives in danger is not the solution. Sincerely, Andrea Stark, Richard Stark, Ysella Stark
10/2/2025	Deepthi Sethi	Written comments, see attached.
10/2/2025	Ray Maldonaldo, East Bay YIMBY	Written comments, see attached.
9/27/2025	Charlotte Niel	Bad idea. With all the additional people it will create congestion and a hazard if there is ever a need to evacuate the area. Really, what are you people thinking. 200 units????!! Charlotte Niel, ____Grisborne Ave, Oakland CA. 94611 - Sent from my iPhone

10/1/2025	Gail Wilkinson	As a long-term resident of Montclair, I use Moraga Avenue frequently. We don’t need additional cars added to an already busy street. It is a lifeline for us in Montclair as it was during the 1991 fire. It’s unfortunate that Piedmont has no other land on which to build the required new apartments, which is a bad idea in my opinion. We are already overcrowded. Perhaps you can get an exemption? I oppose the Blair Park development! Sincerely, Gail Wilkinson
10/1/2025	David Boatwright	Please reconsider the subject housing project. Not only would this project increase fire risk in a difficult area to access for firefighters, but Moraga Rd in this area is already a bottleneck in this narrow & winding section of road. Finding an alternative area for this project will be to the advantage of both Oakland AND Piedmont. David
9/29/2025	Peter Kadison	Unsafe..too congested...surely there is somewhere else...flatlands in Oakland by West Oakland BART? Port? Embarcadero? Moratorium is a vital artery this will be terrible congestion... Sent from my iPad
9/29/2025	Michell Cox	Please do not go forward with housing in Moraga Canyon. Pick a Park in your fine City instead.You will hear "NIMBY" and they can "get over it" or relocate. I used Moraga Avenue as my Escape Route during 1991 Oakland Hills Fire. That thoroughfare "Saves Lives". It is a recommended exit route per the OFD. Let your conscience be your guide. Will this City decision be the one responsible for "the loss of lives", as was a lesson learned in the "one road out of Hiller Highlands". Housing and the ramifications of more cars and people fleeing for Safety is not a solution for the State Mandate. Let your conscience be your guide on this action. Step out of your comfort zone and ask for an exemption to the "mandated number" number of housing units. Pick a Park (or two) and build less units. Thank you in advance. Best, Michelle Cox Resident/Homeowner Upper Rockridge District of Oakland, CA
10/1/2025	Sha Coleman	I am 100% in support for housing at Blair Park. We desperately need more housing. Young people have nowhere to live. Don't cave into the NIMBYs. Best Regards, Sha Coleman, Board Member, Junior Center of Art and Science, Oakland CA
9/7/2025	Deepti Sethi (Open Gov)	The City is ignoring the very real risks of wildfire mitigation and evacuation that are unique to the Moraga Canyon landscape. State approval of housing projects does not eliminate the need to account for local conditions. Yet the proposed design standards make no mention of wildfire risk or mitigation. In a high-risk fire zone like Moraga Canyon, that omission is unacceptable. Residents reasonably expect that new development will include deliberate risk-reduction measures, not simply cosmetic standards such as fence height or façade style. Without these, new construction will contribute to the fire hazard rather than mitigate it. Examples of necessary measures include: • Greywater and rainwater harvesting to provide water for vegetation and firefighting. • Hydrated buffer strips and irrigation zones to slow fire spread, even in drought years. • Expanded hardscaping and fire-adapted construction practices proven to reduce risk. Wildfire safety demands a strategic, site-specific approach—not a one-size-fits-all checklist. Evacuation Capacity is already inadequate: The single evacuation route through Moraga Avenue is already insufficient. Adding hundreds of new units will make escape in a fire virtually impossible. • Fire trucks cannot navigate narrow streets like Abbott Way, Echo, or Scenic. • Residents—including children, elderly, and those with limited mobility—are told to evacuate by foot, which is unrealistic and unsafe. • Alternative routes only feed back into Moraga or lead directly into fire-prone vegetation. Insurance companies already recognize the severity of this risk by restricting or denying coverage. Ignoring it here places lives in danger. This is about safety, not housing opposition: Residents are not opposing affordable housing. We recognize the need for it. The issue is location and safety. Concentrating dense housing in a high-fire-risk canyon, while adopting standards that prioritize developer convenience and “processing speed” over safety, is negligence. This is the right project, but the wrong place—and the wrong approach. Standardized objective design standards ignore the realities of wildfire risk and evacuation in Moraga Canyon. The City must instead adopt site-specific, enforceable standards that protect lives, homes, and public safety. This includes finding alternatives if there is not a reasonable evacuation plan. To do otherwise is to knowingly create a dangerous condition of public property. Sincerely, Deepti Sethi
9/8/2025	Gabrielle Castriotta (Open Gov)	Having further reviewed the plan, I need to change my comments. I thought at first that the housing would be going ABOVE Coach's field, in the area that is already flat and has some remnants of paving. I see now that this area is not actually within the city of Piedmont and thus not where the housing is intended to go. I unfortunately must withdraw any support for the plan now that I see that the housing would be on such a steep, cramped parcel, and that the corp yard would be moved to Blair Park to accommodate it. This area seems just too dangerous and uninsurable to build on, and it lacks any second exit to a street other than Moraga. Perhaps the city could consider acquiring the above-mentioned flat area (from Oakland? from the cemetery?) and putting housing there. That might be crazy but no crazier than the current plan. As others have suggested, Linda Park would make more sense as a place to build dense housing closer to amenities and transit, at least in comparison to the current suggestions. If Blair Park were to be utilized, it would behoove the city to maintain at least some of this precious green space as a public park and not fill it entirely with housing. Piedmont can do better than this plan
9/8/2025	Michael Henn (Open Gov)	So far this has just been a giant bureaucratic exercise lasting 2 years and costing a million dollars or more. Nowhere in the mountain of verbiage do I find the two most important questions: 1. In the current adverse economic environment for multiple unit housing construction with high interest rates and construction costs, is there any reasonable probability that the market rate housing will be built. I note that fully entitled projects all over the BA are being delayed. 2. Given the requirements of Article 34 of the State Constitution, a public vote is mandated for all city sponsored or city subsidized below market rental projects. How does the city think that it can evade this requirement?
10/2/2025	Kristin Johnson (Open Gov)	I applaud the City for its thoughtful, inclusive and transparent approach. California is way underbuilt for the demand, thus leading to greater homelessness and unstable families, all of which threaten our long term security and prosperity. So, the State has stepped in to mandate that each community does its part. I believe that building in Piedmont is necessary, including for people who are currently facing extremely expensive housing relative to their income. I am encouraged by the studies that say the roads may be safer, adding stoplights and actually reducing the speeding which is currently so prevalent. This is rarely used space, not a valuable nature preserve. We all live on land that has been subdivided over years and building density is key to creating the amount of units we all need.
10/2/2025	Anonymous (Open Gov)	I have lived near Templar Place & Harbord Drive around the corner from the proposed development site for the past 30years. While I applaud the commission’s desire to deliver affordable housing, I strongly object to the location and density of the planned apartment complex under the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan. My major concerns are general traffic safety, pedestrian safety, and emergency evacuation routes. Thanks to WAZE, during commute hours, there has been a considerable increase in the number of people who now leave the traffic jam on Hwy 24 East drive down Broadway, come up Broadway Terrace, turn right on Clarewood Drive which becomes Harbord Drive and then exit onto Moraga to go South on Hwy 13. The backed-up traffic on to Harbord during commute times because of all the cars trying to make a left on Moraga can extend as far as Maxwellton Drive. Placing nearly 200 units on this narrow, high-risk, high-traffic corridor would not only incese this problem but also completely block the exit of all the people who live past the end of Clarewood Drive in the event of a fire. After the Palisades Fire, one thinks more of their planned exit to safety. Moraga Avenue is a designated emergency evacuation route for both Piedmont and Oakland. Directing hundreds of additional residents through this corridor during a fire which could easily ignite in that canyon is reckless and irresponsible and puts us all at unnecessary risk. It’s my understanding, from information given after the 1991 Oakland Hills Fire, Moraga Canyon was designated a high fire-risk zone. Adding hundreds of units in this fire-prone canyon will increase this risk considerably. Additionally, it is very likely to make obtaining insurance coverage worse than it already is as many of my neighbors have had their policies dropped in the past two years. How does the city plan to pay for and implement the infrastructure needs for this 197-unit proposal? Considering the exorbitant costs likely to unfold, other options need to be more urgently explored. Namely: • Freeing up excess land from the Piedmont schools which are not currently effectively utilized. • Supporting infill development closer to Grand Avenue and Lakeshore Avenue better supporting low-income residents rather than attempting to force dense development into a narrow, fire-prone canyon with no sidewalks or crosswalks for these residents. I hope you will reconsider this plan and explore alternatives that make more sense for the residents for whom you are trying to accommodate. Many thanks for your consideration!
10/1/2025	Lawrence Siskind (Open Gov)	The problems with the Moraga Canyon Specific plan -- including traffic safety, fire evacuation, noise and light pollution, and many others -- have been ably described by other commentators, and I will not take up the Council's time by repeating them. Instead, I would like to mention that the decision before the City Council is not either/or. To fulfill the state mandate of constructing 587 additional housing units in Piedmont, some construction in Moraga Canyon is probably unavoidable. The crucial failing in the Planning Commission’s proposal is its wildly disproportionate approach. The Planning Commission would locate 199 of the 587 units, or 34%, in one small, confined and congested area. If approved, this plan will not only create a host of safety and pollution problems, it would also conflict with the policies underlying the Regional Housing Needs Allocation process. The RHNA mandates a fair distribution of new housing, and requires planners to avoid segregating and concentrating the new residents. Unfortunately, that is exactly what the Moraga Canyon Specific plan, in its current form, does. Reducing the safety and pollution problems described by other commentators, and complying with the dictates of the RHNA, do not require eliminating new construction in the Moraga Canyon altogether. But they do require a more sensible distribution. There are many others areas in Piedmont, particularly in the City center, that have somehow avoided their fair share of the new housing. There is no magic formula for determining with precision how many new units should be built in any particular neighborhood. But imposing more than a third of the new units in one small area is an egregious misallocation. The City Council should remand the issue back to the Planning Commission with instructions to draft a new plan that better comports with the policies of the RHNA. Instead of locating more than a third of the new units in Moraga Canyon, the new plan should allow for somewhere between a tenth (59) and a fifth (117) of them.
10/1/2025	Anonymous (Open Gov)	Three questions about the proposed plan for Moraga Canyon - has a soil report been done given the large slide on the left side of the canyon as your drive toward Highway 13? Secondly, who is going to pay for this projected construction of 197 homes in the canyon and all the landscape and road work? How will the committee estimate cost given the recent changes in cost of building materials being imported?

9/16/2025	Anonymous (Open Gov)	I’m not opposed to adding housing in Piedmont, but I am opposed to the plan as it stands today. I believe other solutions (a smaller development and/or other locations) should be sought for three reasons: 1. Blair Park (and Moraga Canyon) is the last park we have in Piedmont. It’s beautiful, it’s habitat to many creatures (we had nesting bald eagles to the delight of the community), and it’s rare. We don’t get our natural spaces back once we destroy them. The fact that environmental concerns were surfaced and ignored per the CEQA law was jaw dropping to me. We live in a so-called green state, and we’re supposed to lead the way, but apparently, being informed of hazards is good enough. We can do better in Piedmont. 2. Safety. It’s simply too many cars and people concentrated in one place. Day to day is bad enough, but during an emergency, the consequences will be deadly. 3. Impact on the community at large. The studies done concerned a small piece of road, but did not consider the numerous residents above and below the development. Many don’t even know about the development. To add to that, those on the committee who would be most affected were asked to recuse themselves. Those are the people we want to speak! The planning committee meeting felt like a formality to bulldoze over the community (literally and figuratively) rather than represent and listen to the community. Answers given to questions felt flippant, procedural, and incomplete. Some consultants couldn’t even be bothered to be on camera. I get that you have every legal loophole on your side, but you should do the right thing anyway.
9/15/2025	Anonymous (Open Gov)	The current housing mandate has been a challenge for every town in California, setting off firestorms and conflict. Our precious little City of Piedmont is no different. Although there are myriad issues with the Moraga Canyon Plan, I want to focus on safety, the streets and the quality of life for the hundreds of families and homes on the North side of Piedmont. I am specifically speaking of those that feed into Moraga Avenue above and below Highland Avenue, most immediately Pala, Monte, Mesa, and Bonita. The impact from this proposed development also extends well into Oakland above and the neighborhoods well below Bonita. These lovely neighborhood streets, a signature of the city of Piedmont, will become constantly congested & serve as the bypasses to avoid the wait at the Highland Avenue traffic light. This poses serious danger for our children and negatively impacts the quality of life & the value of the neighborhood homes. The plan proposed Monday evening, September 8th went into great depth with diagrams & explanations of the traffic & road changes. The plan covered only one quarter mile of Moraga. Where is the plan for the impact of these hundreds of additional cars a day on the immediate neighborhoods and entire city? This problem becomes unimaginable in a fire or earthquake emergency. I need not remind you of the life-threatening gridlock on Moraga in 1991. Moraga Avenue cannot and will not adequately absorb the huge volume of additional cars in an evacuation plan. A blinking light or officer attempting to direct traffic in a horrific emergency is not only magical thinking but poses a deadly safety issue. The Moraga Canyon Plan, though convenient to drop at the North edge of town, is not safe, does not protect quality of life for the residents and should not go forward in scale or design as proposed. I do support additional housing, however this proposal is too large, has not enough infrastructure for its residents and has not adequately studied the impact & safety on the neighborhood & the city, including abolishing the last open space in Piedmont, Blair Park.
9/10/2025	Anonymous (Open Gov)	From the public hearing, I gathered that at some point earlier in this process the commission chose to majorly expand the number of units for the Moraga Canyon development in order to fund improvements to recreational amenities (e.g. batting cages, astroturf field). For existing residents of the area who will bear the brunt of this massive new complex being shoehorned into Moraga Canyon, this is very frustrating. Also, I was struck by how much the traffic and safety concerns dominated the public comments in the hearing. That's a very salient issue, but I'd encourage the commission to not overlook the other major concerns that have been raised by the community. Lastly, I'd love to know whether the public will have an opportunity to stay informed and involved in later stages of this process, like when we’re talking to developers. It sounds like that will be another critical period with major implications for what's built, so the public deserves transparency and participation.
9/8/2025	Anonymous (Open Gov)	When I read this plan I feel as if I’m listening to the current administration in DC. Saying something doesn’t make it true. The reality: dangerous road, no sidewalks. Last open space in the city. Loss of green space and mature oaks. It’s a much longer list. As a life long Moraga canyon resident who has decades of personal experience driving the road, (and I’m certainly not alone), I know the area and the changes on a day to day basis. To think this development will improve anything is an act of hubris. At times it can take up to 10 minutes to get onto Moraga from a side street. People speed. Bikes race down the hill. It is very very dangerous. Coming back up the hill after 3:00, cars are backed up as far as Monticello. Meaning you’re waiting for the light at Highland and Moraga for 10-15 minutes. This plan will have the traffic down to Pleasant Valley. I was here during the firestorm. These roads are narrow. Panic does not increase the safety of trying to evacuate. This is a high fire risk area. I lived through it. It was terrifying. To think of adding hundreds of more people into the mix of evacuating is ill advised at best. I want to know what the city will do when the first traffic fatality, either in cars, involving bikes, children... I question the decision to have a fall back position of “design immunity” in the case of fatalities. Aren’t the city planners supposed to have the safety of the citizens as a first priority? Note: • Cities often raise design immunity as a defense (i.e., planning/design decisions approved by the government are usually protected). • That immunity can be lost if changed physical conditions make the design dangerous and the city had notice and time to fix it (or created the danger). • The California Supreme Court has recently allowed a high-profile roadway case against a city to proceed (Whitehead v. City of Oakland), reinforcing that plaintiffs can sometimes move forward against municipalities. • There are real examples where plaintiffs recovered damages (or obtained large settlements/verdicts) in dangerous-road/public-property cases against cities or Caltrans. I urge you to acknowledge the real issues at stake regarding a dangerous road, potential fatalities with increased traffic and evacuation issues in a high risk fire area. There is a better planning to be created with considerations to all of the community.
9/7/2025	Anonymous (Open Gov)	This housing plan needs to be entirely abandoned for glaring safety reasons -- fire, earthquake, and traffic. What follows is a real-life reminder of deadly fire danger the City of Piedmont is courting. My family survived the Oakland Firestorm solely because of walkways that traverse the hills throughout Upper Rockridge. Our home, destroyed by the fire, was on a long, narrow winding cul-de-sac. Early on, a neighbor's home, consumed by flames, fell burning into the street blocking exit for about 40 homes. We headed out on foot down the walkways, family dog in tow, with the flames remarkably close behind. Let us not invite future deadly experiences by approving this totally unacceptable housing plan. Piedmont does indeed need a carve-out from the State's housing "mandates". Call your legislator!
10/2/2025	Diane Misaka	Written correspondence, see attached.
10/2/2025	Todd Williams, Fennemore Law Firm	Written correspondence, see attached.
10/3/2025	Deborah Leland	Written correspondence, see attached.
10/3/2025	Tom O'Neill	Written correspondence, see attached.
10/3/2025	Julie Stein	Written correspondence, see attached.
10/3/2025	Joy Kaiser Moon	My name is Joy Kaiser and I live at ___ Echo Lane. I'd like to submit a comment ahead of the meeting on Monday. I'll also submit the same comment to the feedback page. I was concerned at the last meeting when the consultant shared the negative results of the CEQA review, and earnestly confused about why these findings were just glazed over. I want to draw your attention to what the CEQA review already tells us: Moraga Canyon is one of the worst sites in Piedmont to build a large housing complex. CEQA doesn’t give letter grades, but it does issue the harshest designation possible: “Significant and Unavoidable Impacts.” That’s the verdict this site has received in multiple categories. 1. Wildfire & Evacuation - The Housing Element EIR admits wildfire evacuation delays could be 8 to 40 minutes. That is not a minor inconvenience, it is a life-threatening risk. No amount of lane striping or landscaping offsets the reality of funneling hundreds of new residents into an already narrow canyon during a fire. CEQA was blunt: this impact is unavoidable. 2. Traffic & Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) - The traffic and VMT studies were conducted over two years ago, before the large-scale return-to-office movement. At that time, commuter patterns were far lower. The reality today is heavier, faster traffic on Moraga Avenue. Relying on outdated traffic counts undercuts today’s reality. This is not a safe corridor, and adding nearly 1,000 new car trips a day makes it worse. 3. Climate Impacts - CEQA already concluded that greenhouse gas emissions and VMT cannot be mitigated here. And the Specific Plan itself offers no meaningful specifics on how development would be environmentally friendly. •Will the project be all-electric, with no new gas pipelines? •Will there be adequate EV charging for residents, or just token stalls? •Will solar, storage, or energy offsets be required? Right now, the answer to each of these questions is no. A plan without enforceable commitments is not in line with the city's climate goals. 4. A “Specific Plan” Without Specifics - This is called a “Specific Plan,” but there is very little that is specific about it. Key issues such as traffic, infrastructure, fire evacuation, and sustainability are all kicked down the road with vague promises that they’ll be solved later. Piedmont deserves better than a placeholder plan that locks us into unavoidable risks without real mitigation. Conclusion When CEQA itself says a site has significant and unavoidable impacts across wildfire, traffic, climate, and infrastructure, the message is clear: this is the wrong site for large-scale development. Approving the MCSP as written would mean ignoring not only community concerns, but the environmental record. I urge you to reject the Moraga Canyon Specific Plan in its current state. The project needs to be appropriately scaled to the conditions of the site and more thoroughly detailed. Thank you, Joy Kaiser
10/3/2025	Todd Kaiser	Written comments, see attached.

10/5/2025	Winifred Walters	Written comments, see attached.
10/2/2025	Peggy Esposito	Written comments, see attached.
10/2/2025	Deepti Sethi	Written comments, see attached.
10/3/2025	Deepti Sethi	Written comments, see attached.
10/5/2025	Alan	Written comments, see attached.