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To: [Betsy Andersen](#); [Conna McCarthy](#); [City Council](#)
Cc: [Marcia Lane](#) ([REDACTED]); [David Lane](#) ([Marcia's Husband](#) - [REDACTED]); [Patsie Kao](#); [John Kao](#); [Jeni \(Gardner \) Roberts](#); [Daniel Roberts](#); [Luke Schloegel](#) ([REDACTED]); [Heidi Schloegel](#) ([REDACTED]); [Rachel Asa](#); [Rosanna Bayon Moore](#); [City Clerk](#); [Anna Brown](#); [Lisa Argue](#); [adolid@piedmont.k12.ca.us](#); [Pete Palmer](#); [Jeremy Bowers](#); [Dave Brannigan](#)
Subject: RE: Proposed Changes to the 300 Block of Bonita, Agenda Item #3, May 5, 2025 Piedmont City Council Meeting – For Serious Safety Reasons and the Conflict with Piedmont’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)
Date: Saturday, May 3, 2025 6:52:18 PM

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Dear Mayor Smegal Andersen, Vice Mayor McCarthy, Members of the City Council, and Piedmont Staff,

I regret that I am unable to attend the City Council meeting on May 5, 2025, and offer my apologies for not being able to address you in person.

***** “ ***Nobody knows what’s like living in someone else’s neighborhood, unless you live their yourself*** ”

I am writing to express my serious concerns regarding the proposed changes to the 300 Block of Bonita. After reviewing FEMA guidelines, Piedmont’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), and the LHMPs of neighboring municipalities—including the Town of Moraga—I **believe this proposal directly contradicts the stated goals and principles of hazard mitigation planning.**

The LHMP’s core objective is to reduce risk and loss from foreseeable disasters by identifying local vulnerabilities and implementing strategies to mitigate them. The 300 Block of Bonita is a narrow, constrained street in an already vulnerable area. It presents longstanding challenges for emergency vehicle access and rapid evacuation during wildfires, earthquakes, and other emergencies.

Any modifications that increase congestion, reduce accessibility, or add population density in this corridor will amplify risks to life, property, and economic stability. In doing so, such changes undermine both the letter and the spirit of Piedmont’s LHMP, which is intended to strengthen public safety and community resilience—not compromise it.

The 300 Block of Bonita serves as a critical egress and evacuation route for four schools, City Hall, the Fire Department, the swimming pool, and numerous residential properties. Maintaining its full functionality and safety must remain a top priority.

When a similar proposal was brought forward in 2023, I submitted a detailed map identifying over 100 additional available parking spaces within one to two blocks of City Hall and the community pool. During a walk-through with then City Administrator Sara Lillevand, Vice Mayor McCarthy, and myself, we located and verified 89 of these spaces. That exercise confirmed there was no practical need to impose additional congestion on the already narrow and high-risk 300 Block of Bonita. The block was subsequently removed from that version of the plan.

If parking changes are needed in central Piedmont, I strongly encourage consideration of alternative streets—such as Vista, Hillside, and El Cerrito—which present fewer safety concerns and more appropriate conditions for modification.

To further support my position, I would like to highlight a few of several specific concerns with the

current proposal:

1. **Mapping Inaccuracy**

The map provided by Coastland Engineering in the staff report is inaccurate, incomplete, and not to scale—as evidenced by incorrect measurements and the misrepresentation of traffic flow, particularly on Bonita Avenue between Magnolia and Vista, and the failure to accurately depict directional traffic patterns to and on the 300 Block of Bonita. Relying on flawed documentation to justify substantial changes—especially in a high-risk evacuation corridor that affects the safety of all Piedmont residents—raises serious concerns about the proposal's adequacy and integrity.

2. **Parking Space and Vehicle Size Incompatibility**

In California, the average angled parking space is about 18–20 feet deep and 9 feet wide—suitable for standard vehicles, but insufficient for full-sized trucks, especially those with dually wheels or trailer hitches, which may be 22–26 feet in length. Similar angled spaces on nearby Magnolia Avenue are already dimensionally inadequate. Construction vehicles frequently parked on the 300 Block often occupy multiple spaces or intrude into residential driveways. Adding angled parking will likely force these oversized vehicles into the remaining 12-foot-wide traffic lane, obstructing emergency vehicles and endangering safe access.

3. **Fire Department Access Requirements (Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 19, § 3.05)**

- (a) “Required access roads from every building to a public street shall be all-weather hard-surfaced (suitable for use by fire apparatus) right-of-way not less than 20 feet in width.”
- (b) The California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) similarly requires fire access roads near schools to be 20–26 feet wide to ensure safe fire apparatus movement.

[California MUTCD Link](#)

4. **NFPA Fire Apparatus Access Guidelines**

The National Fire Protection Association specifies that access roads must provide 20 feet of unobstructed width, 13.5 feet of vertical clearance, and an appropriate turning radius. Fire apparatus must also be able to reach within 50 feet of a building's exterior entry point.

[NFPA Access Roads Reference](#)

5. **DSA Policy 07-03 – Emergency Access for Schools**

The California Division of the State Architect mandates unobstructed emergency access roadways for schools and student drop-off areas, emphasizing the importance of keeping evacuation corridors clear.

[DSA Policy Link](#)

These are only a few of the many issues raised by the current proposal. The cumulative safety risks posed by altering the 300 Block of Bonita cannot be overlooked. **In doing so, The City is at risk of endangering the lives of the community as a whole, more specifically the risk of losing a life.**

In closing, I once again urge the City Council to either table, reject, or substantially revise the proposed changes to the 300 Block of Bonita—or to remove this block from the proposed parking modifications altogether. This action would be consistent with our city's adopted hazard mitigation goals and long-term commitment to public safety.

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

Sincerely,

Michael

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