

Mayor Meg Kelly
Commissioner of Finance, Michele Madigan
Commissioner of Accounts, John Franck
Commissioner of Public Safety, Robin Dalton
Commissioner of Public Works, Skip Scirocco

October 20, 2021

Dear Mayor and Commissioners,

RE: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE FINAL UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Sustainable Saratoga has actively participated in every step of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) process with the goals of improving the protections for our natural habitats and bringing the UDO into compliance with the city's 2015 Comprehensive Plan.

We thank the City's Planning Department for their hard work on this document, especially given that much of the work was completed during the COVID pandemic. And we recognize that there are some good sustainability and environmental protection provisions included in the UDO.

However, there are a few critical shortcomings of the final UDO that what we feel must be remedied before the UDO is approved by the City Council. Our concerns fall into two related categories – uses in the Greenbelt and rural design standards. Both permitted uses and design standards help to define the rural character that is the "country" portion of our "City in the Country."

We believe our concerns can be addressed through a handful of specific, relatively simple changes. We are eager to work with the Planning Department staff and City Council members to make these changes. We have attached draft language that would strengthen and clarify the protections of the Greenbelt.


USES: The final UDO contains some uses that are either too intense for the Greenbelt (RR and GC-R) or should be restricted to the urban core. We have made specific recommendations for changes to the allowable uses in Amendment #1 (attached).

RURAL DESIGN STANDARDS: The UDO incorporates many of the provisions from the existing zoning ordinance's design standards for the RR and GC-R, but we would like to see a few of the omitted provisions and illustrations added into the final UDO. We would also like stronger language requiring waivers by the land use boards to have a written explanation to ensure consistency in the application of these standards. These recommendations are detailed in Amendments #2, 3 and 4 (attached).

We all share the goal of protecting our Greenbelt and keeping our downtown vibrant. **We believe it is critically important that these amendments are included in the UDO before it is adopted.** We welcome the opportunity to work with you to develop wording to achieve this shared goal.

Sincerely,


Wendy Mahaney
Executive Director


Dianna Goodwin
Co-Chair, Board of Directors


Laura Rappaport
Co-Chair, Board of Directors

