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**To:** [info@planbayarea.org](mailto:info@planbayarea.org)  
**Cc:** [Susan Gorin](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for Plan Bay Area 2050: Sonoma County Springs Specific Plan  
**Date:** Monday, July 20, 2020 10:45:40 PM

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**\*External Email\***

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a resident of [REDACTED], on [REDACTED], 1 [REDACTED]. I am aware that Sonoma County applied for and received a designation of PDA (Priority Development Area) in Feb 2020 for the Springs Specific Plan, an area along Highway 12 through part of unincorporated Sonoma Valley and including the Donald St semi-rural neighborhood where I live.

I am against the Springs Specific Plan being designated a PDA. While I'm an advocate for the goals of Plan Bay Area 2050, I believe there are too many reasons that make the Springs Specific Plan inappropriate for higher density housing and ineligible as a PDA:

- We live in a High Fire Danger area, with few routes for evacuation. Higher density housing will exacerbate the risk of injury and fatality in the event of a wildfire. Highway 12 is already typically congested. My street, Donald St, is eyed for a high density housing development; having one end at Highway 12 and the other as a dead end at rural space that is vulnerable to wildfire, it lacks adequate egress in an emergency.
- We have insufficient emergency water supply due to inadequate water pressure and storage.
- Streets and roads in our semi-rural area are in sorry disrepair, and sidewalks do not exist in many parts. Increased car traffic will only worsen these conditions and increase risk to pedestrians.
- Public transportation is very limited in our area, with infrequent service within Sonoma Valley as well as to adjacent cities. It is even more severely limited to reach transit centers within the county to access other routes to other parts of the Bay Area.
- Off Donald St, close to Highway 12, is Oak Ridge Senior Apartments on Beatrice Dr. It has elderly residents, many who have mobility issues, are no longer driving or are without cars and who would need assistance in the event of an emergency requiring evacuation. And at the other end of Donald St is Sonoma Acres Assisted Living Memory Care, whose residents would certainly need more assistance in such an event. Our neighborhood knows all too well the high risk of wildfire in our area and sees the limited options for safe evacuation as a liability.
- It is my understanding that areas outside of Urban Growth Boundaries are not eligible to be PDAs. If so, the Springs Specific Area is not eligible.
- The PDA application, signed 9/11/2019, was submitted without consultation with the residents of the Springs Specific Plan, which is against MTC policies on public disclosure and participation. Per the Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury 2020 Report, Permit Sonoma and

Sonoma County officials failed to include residents (specifically, 35% of residents in the affected area, i.e., those within my Donald St neighborhood) in the development of the Springs Specific Plan over many years. Approving the Springs Specific Plan as a PDA further perpetuates the violation of these policies and does not respect the mandate for public input. To date, the recommended actions put forth by the Grand Jury for the county to do by July 1 have not occurred. Also, a draft EIR for the Springs Specific Plan has not yet been submitted for public review.

I wish for increased funding for our area to improve affordable housing, traffic, and public transportation, and to promote a well balanced, diverse, thriving community with growth at an appropriate scale. I do not come from a place of NIMBYism. However, I am disappointed at the lack of transparency and opportunity for public participation, which does not support trust between residents and government officials.

As a concerned citizen, I believe the Springs Specific Plan, as it currently stands, should not be included as a PDA for the above reasons, and hope the MTC and ABAG will reverse its designation. Whether or not it stays a PDA, I ask Sonoma County officials to follow the recommendations of the Grand Jury, including engaging public participation and considering severing the Donald St neighborhood from the Springs Specific Plan.

Sincerely,

Mary Jue  
