

## **Puzzle title: The Downtown Meeting**

Location: Parking meter garden on 3rd Ave.

**Set-up at parking meter garden:** Have puzzle ready for handout.

### **Set-up at 3rd Ave & B St:**

Have the three balloon bunches (“J”, “O”, “Y”). Each is attached to a weight; position them on the sidewalk, ideally so the answer reads straight across (“JOY”). During the day, keep the balloons from bonking into things, getting tangled on things, etc. Watch the strings to make sure they don’t come untied!

Be liberal with helping teams find the answer - this is supposed to be quick. If it’s taking more than ~60 seconds for teams to read them as letters, suggest nudges like “does it look like anything?” and even “you’re looking for a three letter word”.

When teams arrive, they may wonder if you will do something or provide them with information; you can just point to the balloons.

If anyone asks about the balloons themselves: do a search for [cube balloons] and you can find them online.

### **Solution walk-through:**

Each section identifies points on a different path in downtown San Mateo (see below for details). Each path is shaped like one of the four input hexominoes. The hexominoes may be physically placed on the handout map (which is designed to make this work). In the correct layout, the four hexominoes meet at a single point (3rd Ave & B St); the team should head to that point.

Once at 3rd Ave & B St, teams should find large balloons shaped like hexominoes that look like the letters “J”, “O”, and “Y”. That spells JOY, the answer.

**A quick driving tour:** This is a video driving around San Mateo. They just have to figure out where (by noticing street signs, businesses, etc). It starts on 3rd Ave approaching B St, takes B St to 1st Ave, takes 1st Ave to Delaware St, takes Delaware St to 3rd Ave, and loops back to 3rd Ave and B St. The hexomino is a two-by-three “O” block inside this loop.

**Rearranged, it’s no secret in...:** “It’s No Secret In” is an anagram of “INTERSECTIONS”. The italicized words are street name anagrams: OUR LORD OF DEATH => FOURTH+ELDORADO, THE D OF FLORIDA => FIFTH+ELDORADO, THRIFT OWL SHELF => FIFTH+ELLSWORTH, THE THRILL WORDS => THIRD+ELLSWORTH, HUB FORT => FOURTH+B. (Only the root names are used, as capitalized on the map; “St” and “Ave” are not included in the anagram.) This traces a tall “L” hexomino between Eldorado, Ellsworth, Third, and Fifth.

**You'll Encounter Lovable Places!:** The title is an acrostic for "YELP", and capitalized words in the text make "HEXOMINOES". Searching for [hexominoes] in San Mateo on Yelp finds businesses which place a "high Y" between 2nd, 5th, El Camino, and B St. To see all the reviews on Yelp, it may be necessary to press a "see all reviews" button.

**And now this little number:** As clued by the lyrics, the beamed note groups should be identified and counted: 3xF, 4xF, 4xB, 3xD, 2xD, 2xE, 3xE. These letters and numbers can be interpreted on San Mateo's alphanumeric grid: Fremont & 3rd, Fremont & 4th, etc.. This describes a "High 4" hexomino bounded by B St, Fremont St, 2nd Ave and 4th Ave.

**CK Hint/Partial Data [squares = minutes, hexes = points]:**

5 pts	YELP Yes, that's the right Internet site to use: <a href="http://yelp.com/">http://yelp.com/</a>
5 pts	HEXOMINO Yes, that's the right search term you should be using on the appropriate website.

5 pts	INTERSECTIONS Ah yes, "IT'S NO SECRET IN" can be rearranged to spell that. Any other candidates for rearrangement?
5 pts	OURLORDOFDEATH,... Yes, that italicized text is important; how could it be rearranged?

- 7 When studying information about San Mateo, a map might be helpful. Do you have one?
- 15 Each of the four sections (the video, the quotes, the places, and the music) describes a path around the city. When drawn on the map, the paths should make interesting shapes.
- 25 "**Driving tour:** Street signs might help.  
**Rearranged:** Focus on the italicized bits and relate them to intersections.  
**Lovable Places:** The correct website has 4 letters and the correct search term has 8 letters; our title has 4 words and our text has 8 lines.  
**This little number:** Remember FACE and Every Good Boy Does Fine as you count the repetitions.  
**Overall:** Each path is shaped like one of your hexominoes. Figure out "where it all comes together for you."
- 35 "**Driving tour:** The video starts on 3rd St just south of the tracks, makes four right turns, and returns to the same place.  
**Rearranged:** "Our lord of death" is an anagram of "FOURTH" and "EL DORADO".  
**Lovable Places:** Taking the first letters of the words in the titles gives the website name. Taking the first (or last) letter of each line gives the search term. On the website (add .com if necessary), search for the term in San Mateo, and map the businesses you find.  
**This little number:** The first group of notes is three Fs, corresponding to the intersection of Fremont and 3rd.  
**Overall:** Place the hexominoes on the map according to the intersections you found. Find the point where all four hexominoes meet. Go there."

5 pts	FBDE,FFBDDEE Those are the correct letters, but you seem to be ignoring the number of notes in each group.
5 pts	FFFFFFFFBBBDDDDDEEEEE, 7F4B5D5E,F7B4D5E5 Those are the correct letters, but you seem to be ignoring the groupings.
5 pts	3F4F4B3D2D2E3E,F3F4B4D3D2E2E3 Good job counting! Now, what can you do with those number/letter pairs?

30 pts	PEETS,HSBC,PIZZA,ETC. No, we're not looking for a building at the corner. You should look around there for something else.
34 pts	3ANDB, (and other forms...) Well spotted! Head to that location to see what you can find.
34 pts	BALLOON,BALLOONS Yes, those are balloons. Now how can you get an answer word from looking at them?

35 pts	JOY (correct answer)
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