

April 2, 2021

Deanna Santana  
City Manager  
City of Santa Clara

**Re: Housing Opportunities in San José - Forging a Collaborative Path Forward**

Dear Ms. Santana,

We write to you today as part of a coalition that includes many of the region's most prominent housing advocates, affordable housing developers, service providers, and San Jose officials, with a shared commitment to balanced and sustainable development that addresses our region's critical lack of housing affordable to people of all incomes. We urge you to agendize a discussion at the earliest possible meeting date at the Santa Clara Council about allowing housing and neighborhood-serving amenities to proceed in North San José.

Well after this pandemic has passed, our housing crisis will persist. San Jose's approved plans to build thousands more apartments, townhomes, and houses—with Council mandates to make at least 20% of those units affordable—have stalled as a result of legal gridlock. The County of Santa Clara and the City of Milpitas have long ago recognized the imperative to move on from decades-old legal battles in North San Jose, yet concerns about lawsuits from the City of Santa Clara have prevented the construction of even a single unit of housing in North San Jose in more than a half-decade. It is time for San José and Santa Clara to work together to create a Silicon Valley for everyone.

Without a new agreement—one that combines Santa Clara's forbearance of lawsuits against builders with San José's already-public plans to build out transportation infrastructure improvements throughout North San José—we will only exacerbate our Valley's housing crisis. We have worked to overcome the large loss of local funding for transportation projects resulting from statewide elimination of redevelopment agencies necessary by convening regional stakeholders with the Valley Transportation Authority to secure voter approval of Measure B. San José continues to push forward planning, design, environmental clearance, and construction of road improvements that will benefit North San José, Santa Clara, and the entire region. Moreover, the "smart growth" focus of San José's General Plan will ensure construction of housing within walking distance of light rail and BART stations, to mitigate regional traffic concerns.

Additionally, San José is committed to ensuring that an impactful amount of affordable housing will be included in North San José. That's why so many advocates support this effort for collaboration between the cities. Last March, San José voters approved Measure E, which the Mayor and City Council will allocate towards the development of affordable housing across the city, including 20% in North San José. Paired with the County Measure A funding, San José is positioned to move forward a significant amount of affordable housing that will benefit not only the city, but the greater region.

Residents of both Santa Clara and San José want to see a Valley made more affordable for their children. They want their cities to work together to support smart development near strong job centers and

transportation hubs to lessen the impacts of commuting on our environment, our traffic congestion, and quality of life.

Our coalition of housing and affordable housing stakeholders embraces the value of working together—Santa Clara, San José, and our communities—to unlock new residential opportunities in San José and our Valley. We invite you to join our coalition.

Sincerely,

Sam Liccardo, Mayor of San José  
David Cohen, San Jose Councilmember D-4  
Aaron Eckhouse, California YIMBY  
Linda Mandolini, Eden Housing  
Geoffrey Morgan, First Community Housing  
Justin Wang, Green Belt Alliance  
Corey Smith, Housing Action Coalition  
Michael Lane, SPUR  
Jason Baker, Silicon Valley Leadership Group  
Gabriela Chavez-Lopez, SV@Home

