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TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL

November 15, 2022

Honorable Mayor Sam Liccardo and Members of the City Council
City of San Jose
200 East Santa Clara Street, 18th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Mayor Liccardo, and Councilmembers Arenas, Carrasco, Cohen, Davis, Esparza, Foley, Jimenez, Jones, Mahan, and Peralez,

Item 8.4 - North San Jose: Housing Strategy and Proposed Land Use Framework

SV@Home continues to call on the City of San Jose for bold and intentional leadership in adopting explicit housing policies that center equity and inclusion in the redevelopment of North San Jose, committing to a San Jose that is affordable to its residents and integrated racially and socio-economically.

Historically, residential development in North San Jose has failed to implement established affordable housing policies. And, as the North San Jose Development Plan was unwound over the last four years, advocates and community members have called on the City's leadership to rectify these past failings moving forward. We requested the following actions:

- Develop policies and land use tools that will make it feasible and realistic to meet the original requirement that 20% of housing built in the plan area be affordable.
- In addition to the rezoning overlay of appropriate sites for affordable housing and modification of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, consider additional policies to secure land, increase access to city resources, and lower costs for affordable housing.
- Return to the City Council with specific, detailed policies for consideration, including timelines for returning to council for final adoption.

At the May City Council meeting, staff presented a rough outline of land use and affordable housing policies, and the City Council recommitted to supporting policies that would ensure meeting the original commitment of 20% of the total homes being affordable. Because much of this work will be integrated into the complexity of the Housing Element Update, the City Council asked for this status update to be presented as a stand-alone item to clearly demonstrate support for the new direction.

Most recently, the staff of the Planning and Housing Department produced detailed work that is bold and comprehensive, which should continue to receive City Council support. The land use work completed by planning staff deserves particular recognition, as it proposes a robust and creative approach to leveraging policy tools to make the commitment to 20% affordable homes feasible going forward. They have embraced an approach to equitable growth that the city would have struggles to embrace in the past. The combination of an Affordable Housing Overlay, a Mixed Income Overlay, and deliberate efforts to support

November 15, 2022

Item 8.4 - North San Jose: Housing Strategy and Proposed Land Use Framework

Page 2 of 2

concentrations of new residential areas accomplishes the above referenced policy goal, while preserving opportunities for additional commercial growth. Good planning allows housing and jobs development to harmoniously coexist, showing courageous progress towards a more inclusive San Jose.

The success of this effort is far from certain. The complementary affordable housing policies being developed by the Housing Department will be essential to implementation. There are also cautionary lessons from Phase I development when the affordable housing policies and commitments were abandoned when the market experienced challenges, subsequently rebounding and creating new communities exclusively for high income earners.

Sustained commitment to equity and inclusion will be essential, but we remain encouraged and appreciative of the direction of the current plans.

Sincerely,


Regina Celestin Williams
Executive Director