

TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL

May 20, 2019

Honorable President Joe Simitian and Members of the Board of Supervisors
 County of Santa Clara
 70 West Hedding Street, 10th Floor
 San Jose, CA 95110

Dear President Simitian, Vice President Chavez, and Supervisors Cortese, Ellenberg, and Wasserman:

**RE: Item 27. Report on Master Plan Concepts
 for the East Santa Clara Street site**

We write today to express our support for the progress that has been made to date on the East Santa Clara Master Plan and to raise a few key points. This Master Plan represents a model for other County-owned properties, including the Civic Center and Reid Hillview, by establishing a vision for mixed uses that include offices needs of the County and the Santa Clara County Housing Authority, significant new housing development, and ground floor retail adjacent to Bay Area Rapid Transit.

Governor Newsom has called on local governments to make surplus public land available for housing development, especially for projects that provide units at the deepest affordability levels. Developers of affordable housing must compete with market-rate and commercial developers for scarce land. Offering County-owned surplus land to affordable housing developers evens the playing field and makes these developments more financially feasible. The County's efforts to make County-owned land available for housing—particularly affordable housing—shows that this goal is possible. Many of the County's land holdings are well located for dense, mixed-use development.

However, we did want to raise three issues:

1. We are concerned about the long development timeline proposed for development. Planning for affordable housing should not be delayed by the longer horizon for office development. While we recognize the constraints that the County is experiencing, **we urge you to prioritize affordable housing development ahead of office construction.** We need housing now and the County has a real opportunity to get homes built.
2. **We want to ensure that the Plan includes the highest number of homes and support 800 new units--** the upper bound of the possible build out in the plan. While we would have liked the County and the Housing Authority to consider even higher densities to maximize the housing opportunities on public land, the lower number -- 550-units -- is clearly not enough to mitigate the potential for 1,400 jobs on the site.

Ron Gonzales, Chair
*Hispanic Foundation
 of Silicon Valley*

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*Habitat for Humanity
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Staff

Leslye Corsiglia
Executive Director

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3. Finally, understanding how parking and transit patterns may change over the proposed development timeline, **the County should plan to reassess the planned parking areas prior to construction.** Further reducing both the proposed podium and the stand-alone parking structure could allow for the production of additional homes.

We commend the County for its stated commitment to housing opportunities on County-owned land.

Sincerely,



Leslye Corsiglia
Executive Director

