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February 22, 2018

Honorable Mayor Paul and Members of the City Council
City of Cupertino
10300 Torre Avenue
Cupertino, CA 95014

Re: Vallco Special Area Specific Plan - EIR Scoping

Dear Mayor Paul, Vice Mayor Sinks, & Councilmembers Chang, Scharf, & Vaidyanathan:

SV@Home thanks the City of Cupertino for providing the opportunity to comment on the scope of the EIR for the Vallco Special Area Specific Plan. The Specific Plan area is a critical opportunity for mixed-use development that can provide for the needs of Cupertino's current and future residents, workers, and economy.

On behalf of our members, we strongly encourage the City to analyze a range of EIR alternatives that includes **a project alternative that maximizes the number of housing units as part of the plan for mixed-use development on the site.**

Cupertino has a jobs and housing imbalance. According to 2014 Census data, Cupertino has 1.7 jobs for every home in the City. Furthermore, when considering the availability of affordable homes for Cupertino's lower-income workers, the mismatch is even more severe. Census data analyzed by the UC Davis Center for Regional Change shows that Cupertino has a jobs-housing fit of 14.1 – meaning that for every 14 low-wage workers employed in Cupertino, there is only one affordable home.

Historically, Cupertino has failed to meet its affordable housing responsibilities while exceeding its market rate production needs. The job and housing affordability mismatch is reflected in the City's RHNA performance; during the last RHNA cycle (2007 - 2014) Cupertino met only 11 percent of its very low-income allocation, 14 percent of its low income allocation, and 24 percent of its moderate income allocation.

Even more critical is the fact that, of the small number of units the City has produced, an overwhelming share are expensive and out of reach for vast majority of people who need housing. This is again reflected the City's RHNA performance, which shows that in the last cycle, the City produced 184 percent of its above moderate-income RHNA, while permitting less than half the number of homes needed for lower-income categories. As a result, ***Cupertino has externalized all of its low-income housing needs*** – which is a major concern, considering that over half of its current RHNA (2014-2022)

is for very low and low-income households. Yet despite exceeding market rate production needs, Census data shows that Cupertino’s housing production has significantly slowed since the 1990s, all while the City’s population and jobs have grown. The number of units built since 2000 represents only 10.4 percent of the City’s overall housing stock.

With Cupertino’s employment growth currently outpacing forecasted rates, balanced development in the Specific Plan area – with a mix of housing, office, and retail – is essential. Toward the City’s goal of addressing its affordability challenges through balanced growth, we strongly recommend that the EIR scope include the study of a project alternative that maximizes the number of housing units as part of the plan for mixed-use development on the site.

Inclusion of the recommended EIR alternative will support the City’s effort to effectively deliberate, and ultimately, decide upon how balance can be achieved on the Vallco site.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback through such a robust community engagement effort. We look forward to participating in this evening’s EIR Scoping Meeting as well as future phases of the planning process.

Sincerely,



Pilar Lorenzana
Deputy Director

Cc:
Piu Ghosh, City of Cupertino
Aarti Shrivastava, City of Cupertino
Kristy Weis, David J. Powers &
Associates