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May 12, 2020

Mayor Abe-Koga and Members of the City Council
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

Re: Item 6.2 Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance (TRAO) Modifications

Dear Mayor Abe-Koga, Vice Mayor Kamei, and Councilmembers Clark, Hicks, McAlister, Matichak, and Ramirez:

On behalf of SV@Home, thank you for your efforts to help all Mountain View residents impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis. We know that this is a difficult time for everyone, and are thankful that the City Council and Staff are working hard to not only identify and act on emergency solutions, but to continue to advance systemic policy changes that will assist the most vulnerable members of the community. **To that end, we support all of the TRAO modifications proposed in the staff report and wish to outline a few additional recommendations below.**

The proposed revisions to the Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance date from before the COVID-19 crisis, and in a time when shelter in place ordinances have underscored the importance of a stable home for us all, it is appropriate to revisit the assumptions that shaped past renter protection policies. **In addition to the excellent staff recommendations, we propose the following modifications:**

- 1. Increase the eligible age for the special circumstances payout from the current maximum of 17 (under 18) to 20 or 21.** Many high school seniors are 18 or 19 years old. It would be in the interest of the Mountain View community to ensure that high school aged residents are able to maintain continuity in schooling. Additionally, given the high costs of housing in Mountain View, it is increasingly common for children to depend on their parents to provide a stable living situation if they attend community college or are pursuing other vocational training.
- 2. Increase the special circumstances payment for households containing seniors, children, and people with disabilities by \$5000 to a total of \$8000.** The relocation benefits proposed by the redeveloper of 1555 W Middlefield add an additional \$5000 to the city required benefit,

showing that a larger increase in the TRAO payment is feasible.

3. **Include a provision to cover moving expenses, estimated at \$500-\$1000 per household.** Based on a non-scientific survey of available moving options, the cheapest rental for a 26' van (suitable for 3-4 bedrooms) from Mountain View to Tracy costs \$241, not including any lost wages from the work of packing up an apartment. Based on an informal online survey, Bay Area residents reported paying anywhere from \$400 to \$1400 to cover moving expenses (up to 2 bedrooms) within the Bay Area.
4. **Direct staff to further study the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis on the displacement of Mountain View residents as the City prepares its comprehensive anti-displacement strategy.** Mountain View is already at the forefront of creative approaches to help residents impacted by COVID-19. The City's anti-Displacement Strategy will need to reflect the new realities that already vulnerable residents face in a post-COVID economic environment.

Thank you for your consideration of these modifications to the Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance.

Sincerely,



David Meyer
Director of Strategic Initiatives