

Via Email

March 29, 2022

Honorable Mayor Sam Liccardo and Members of the City Council
City of San Jose

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

Item 8.2 – Actions Related to the Implementation of the Commercial Linkage Fee

We write today to express our concern that despite falling short in our response to the pressing affordability crisis in our communities, San Jose is not adequately preparing for the increased need for affordable housing that will accompany the post pandemic growth in the city. The Commercial Linkage Fee is the primary tool used by cities throughout the county to fund affordable housing development as they increase local employment. San Jose's policy is the weakest in the county and fails to equitably confront these challenges.

We ask the Council to support the direction in the memorandum from Councilmembers Cohen, Jimenez, and Carrasco, now supported in the supplemental memorandum from City Staff, to return to the council with a completed update of the Fee Feasibility Study by the fall of 2022, as originally directed in 2020.

When the last City Council finally adopted a Commercial Linkage Fee in 2020, following years of advocacy and the active engagement of over 50 community-serving organizations, fees were set well below what was feasible due to the uncertainty of the pandemic. At that time, recognizing the immense number of new jobs planned around the city, the council accepted the recommendation from Mayor Liccardo to have City Staff prepare an update of the Fee Feasibility Study and return in no more than two years to reassess appropriate fee levels. ***It is critical that the Council affirm its own direction, and support increasing the fees by Fall of this year.***

We are not through the extensive human, social, and economic impact of the pandemic, but our major employers have fared well, and the current commercial development pipeline will bring well over 100,000 new jobs to the city. **It is imperative for appropriate Commercial Linkage Fees be in place prior to the start of post-pandemic construction to be effective in addressing increased demand for affordable housing.** Our existing need is already tremendous. Inaction would be a failure of our commitment to our communities in recovery.

Sincerely,

Dolores Alvarado, Chief Executive Officer
Community Health Partnership

Nadia Aziz, Directing Attorney
Law Foundation of Silicon Valley

Gisela B. Bushey, CEO
Loaves & Fishes Family Kitchen

Gabriela Chavez-Lopez, Executive Director
Latina Coalition of Silicon Valley

Louis Chicoine, Chief Executive Officer
Abode Services

Gina D. Dalma, Executive Vice President
Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Jennifer Hark Dietz, CEO
PATH

Amie Fishman, Executive Director
Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California

Lavere Foster, Associate Director
African American Community Service Agency

Poncho Guevara, Executive Director
Sacred Heart Community Service

Maricela Gutiérrez, Executive Director
Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network (SIREN)

Laura Hall, President & Chief Executive Officer
EAH Housing.

Janice Jensen, President & Chief Executive Officer
Habitat for Humanity East Bay/Silicon Valley

Gregory R. Kepferle, Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County

Rose Amador LeBeau, CEO
ConXion To Community

Jennifer Loving, Chief Executive Officer
DESTINATION: HOME

Maritza Maldonado, Executive Director
Amigos de Guadalupe Center for Justice and Empowerment

Derecka Mehrens, Executive Director
Working Partnerships USA

Mayra Pelagio-Muñoz, Executive Director
Latinos United for a New America (LUNA)

Sandy Perry
Affordable Housing Network

Dan Sawislak, Executive Director
Resources for Community Development

Jan Stokely, Executive Director
Housing Choices

Andrea K. Urton, Chief Executive Officer
HomeFirst Services of Santa Clara County

Victor Vasquez, Co-Executive Director
SOMOS Mayfair

Justin Wang, Advocacy Manager
Greenbelt Alliance

Jon White, Chief Real Estate Officer
Allied Housing

Regina Celestin Williams, Executive Director
SV@Home

Dan Wu, Executive Director
Charities Housing

Kevin Zwick, Chief Executive Officer
United Way Bay Area