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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,

**8.2 Housing Crisis Work Plan,
8.3 Maximizing Affordable Homes within Projects Receiving City Financing**

We support the Staff recommendations related to the transition of the Housing Crisis Work Plan to a newly established Housing Catalyst Team Work Plan aligned with the timeline and goals of the Housing Element. We are also in support of the increase in the Housing Department's per unit affordable housing funding amount.

As the final status memorandum on the Housing Crisis Workplan acknowledges, we have fallen significantly short of the 10,000-unit affordable housing production goal endorsed by the City Council in 2018. At the time, this goal felt aggressive. Even as we acknowledged that the real housing needs in the city were significantly greater and that the work would need to be sustained.

Significant progress has been made developing tools and implementing levers to address many of the obstacles to affordable housing development – streamlining development processes, making more land available, taking steps to reduce costs, and committing to do more as lessons were learned. Significant work remains on key elements, but we know that the positive impact of the work over the last four years has yet to be fully seen.

The evolution of Housing Crisis Workplan since 2018 has illustrated that the housing crisis will not be addressed solely through the production of new housing units. Council and staff have acknowledged and endorsed the importance of housing preservation, tenant protections, and homelessness prevention as key elements of an equitable and accountable response to the multi-dimensional crisis of housing affordability and displacement. These policies, included in the Anti-Displacement Strategy, the Diridon Station Housing Implementation Plan, and a number of individual work items, remain in development or implementation phases and will be augmented by the policies and programs included in the Housing Element update.

In addition, the North San Jose Affordable Housing Implementation Plan currently under consideration has the potential to shift the development landscape by confronting other barriers to building inclusive housing communities in North San Jose. There have also been major changes in State Law over the last four years, many of which made progress on key elements of the original Housing Crisis Workplan. Along with local implementation of AB 2011, which streamlines development opportunities in urban villages and commercial sites

outside of planned growth areas, we strongly support the proposed amendment of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for 100% affordable housing development through a Site Development Permit and the temporary suspension of construction Taxes for affordable housing.

Finally, it is essential to ensure that planning processes and legal requirements that establish height and setback regulations should not undermine the affordable housing development process. Too often, we have seen our collective needs undermined by a small number of loud voices. As a result, we support local actions to support our shared interest in optimizing the tools we have to respond to the crisis we face.

Transition to the work outlined in the 6th Cycle Housing Element Update is essential, having the benefit of being grounded in robust outreach and detailed assessment of steps San Jose can take to respond equitably to housing needs. The San Jose community must continue to strive for solutions to the housing crisis, and this community deserves a renewed commitment from this City Council and the next.

Sincerely,



Regina Celestin Williams
Executive Director