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From Noreed Safipour Comm. Dev. Dept. Brisbane

Peninsula Young Democrats' Housing Resolution: November 30, 2015

Whereas inaction, inadequate housing policies, a booming local economy, the obstruction of new housing developments, and the lingering specter of racism and classism have created a Housing Crisis on the Peninsula, with skyrocketing real estate prices and median rents rising to over \$2,500 per month for a one-bedroom apartment in San Mateo County, thus displacing middle-class and working-class families, the elderly, immigrants, young people, historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic minorities, and even some white-collar tech workers, resulting in (1) an increase of carbon emissions from long commutes to Peninsula job centers, exacerbating Climate Change, (2) the destruction of wildlife for environmentally unfriendly suburban sprawl in the East Bay and the Central Valley, (3) a socioeconomic homogenizing of Peninsula residents, (4) de facto racial segregation, (5) inadequate disaster preparedness due to the absence of local emergency response workers, (6) reduced community involvement throughout the Bay Area, and (7) a change in the perception of the Peninsula as a diverse and welcoming place.

Whereas the inadequate development of both market-rate and subsidized affordable housing to meet the boom in jobs throughout the region has resulted in a jobs/housing imbalance, with Northern Santa Clara County falling short of the Association of Bay Area Government's estimated need for new approved housing permits between 2007 and 2014 by over 1,000 units (20% of original estimate), and San Mateo County falling short by over 7,500 units (48% of original estimate), while both areas fell short of the estimated need for low and very low income-level affordable housing by a combined 6,700 units (78% of original estimate), all despite larger-than-projected increases in job growth throughout the region.

Whereas, for Peninsula tenants at risk of eviction, no amount of increase in the supply of housing will pay their rents in the short-term or make homeownership attainable, with many of these individuals facing rent increases by a percentage in the upper double digits—often driven by speculation and the overvaluation of properties, as banks and realtors calculate a building's value with the expectation of an increase to market-rate rents—resulting in the mass displacement of tenants from apartment complexes throughout the region, leading to homelessness and the disruption of employment.

Therefore be it resolved that City Councils, County Boards of Supervisors, other governing bodies, and Democratic Party entities on the Peninsula must act to address this crisis by advocating for solutions, potentially including (1) increasing housing supply overall, specifically high density housing along public transit corridors, (2) building more below-market-rate housing units and/or offering housing subsidies for teachers, first responders, and essential service workers, (3) easing restrictions on density, height, and ADUs (i.e., in-law units) (4) instituting and/or supporting first-time homebuyer assistance programs, (5) providing incentives for slow rent increases, as emulated by the Fire Safety First Program in Redwood City, (6) instituting a non-bureaucratic, complaint-based rent stabilization ordinance with just-cause eviction and relocation assistance as a means to discourage speculation and the overvaluation of applicable properties, and (7) instituting commercial impact fees and/or job taxes to mitigate the jobs/housing imbalance, among other solutions, understanding that while certain solutions better apply to some communities, all communities must find ways to both support tenants and increase housing supply.

Therefore be it further resolved that because of the social and environmental ills this housing crisis has created, we require a shift in our communal mode of action and thought, necessitating a duty for all local leaders—community organizers; activists; business executives; all elected officials within San Mateo County and northern Santa Clara County who serve at the City, County, State, and Federal levels; and empowered everyday residents—to come together, express support for this resolution, overcome political inertia, and take initiative to engage the community in an honest dialogue detailing the gravity of the problem, the necessary changes cities must make to accommodate growth, the importance of placing people over profits, and the urgent need to implement solutions as swiftly as possible.