



SAN MATEO, SANTA CLARA & SAN BENITO COUNTIES

March 26, 2021

City of Burlingame  
501 Primrose Road, Burlingame, CA 94010

Via Email to: Mayor O'Brien Keighran, Vice-Mayor Ortiz, and Members of the Burlingame City Council; Meaghan Hassel-Shearer, City Clerk, mhasselshearer@burlingame.org

**Subject: Proposed 1868-1870 Ogden Drive Residential Development**

Dear Mayor O'Brien Keighran and Members of the City Council,

The Sustainable Land Use Committee (SLU) of the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club advocates on development and land use issues in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. We recently saw the article about the Ogden Drive project in the Daily Journal and are pleased that it is located in reasonable proximity to the Millbrae BART / Multi-Modal Station. However, we have one significant concern.

The proposed development looks attractive, and we are pleased it includes 120 units which are much needed to move Burlingame toward a more desirable jobs/housing balance, but we are concerned that only 5% of the units will be affordable.

We have two issues to bring to your attention. According to the Daily Journal, the city's Community Development Director stated 5% Below Market Rate Units (BMR) meets the city's General Plan for "**low-income**" (80% Area Median Income [AMI]) units in this location. However, "low-income" is a very misleading term. Low income by this definition = 80% AMI which is a 2-person family making more than \$113,360 per year income or a 4-person family making \$139,200 annually. That is not "low income" as generally understood by the average citizen. The average low-income family, with members who work in Burlingame's retail stores, hotels, and restaurants, maintain city landscaping, clean local businesses, etc. is lucky to bring in \$50,000 - \$60,000 annually. That means they cannot afford to live in Burlingame, and this affects the entire community. They are forced instead to commute by car long distances from where they live to where they work which increases local traffic congestion, green house gas emissions, and both air and water pollution from dust, rubber, oil, and grease particles kicked up by passing vehicles.

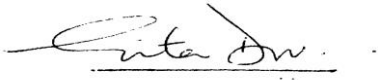
In addition, according to the article, some members of the Council felt 5% BMR was too low and suggested looking into changing the city's BMR requirements, but the Council took no action to

oppose the project as presented and put off further discussion of BMR revision to an undefined future date.

If the city's current BMR requirements are so weak as to demand no more than 5% affordable units in a project, the requirements should be changed to more closely align with the ordinances in most other peninsula cities which currently require between 15% - 20% BMR units per market rate development.

SLU's position on BMR is a minimum of 20% affordable units and we discourage the use of in-lieu fees to cover the cost of not building the full % of affordable units on-site unless the fee is large enough to cover the real cost of constructing the affordable units at a suitable off-site location. We urge the Council in the near future to revise the existing BMR requirements to 20% minimum and to reconsider the approval of 5% at the Ogden site.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gita Dev", with a horizontal line underneath.

Gita Dev, Co-Chair, Sustainable Land Use Committee

Cc: Project Planner Catherine Keylon, Senior Planner - ckeylon@burlingame.org  
Kevin Gardiner, Community Development Director - kgardiner@burlingame.org  
Sustainable Land Use Committee, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter (SCLP)  
James Eggers, Director, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter