



San Mateo, Santa Clara and San Benito Counties

August 7, 2020

Mayor Larry Klein and members of the City Council

City of Sunnyvale

603 All America Way

Sunnyvale, CA 94086

**Re: Moffett Park Specific Plan Update – City Council Study Session August 11, 2020**

Dear Mayor Klein and members of the Sunnyvale City Council,

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter works to protect San Francisco Bay and its ecosystems and to mitigate the effects of climate change on the peninsula and its ecology. We are always concerned with impacts of development in proximity to the Bay and mindful of opportunities to expand nature-based climate resilience.

We have been following the development of Sunnyvale's Moffett Park Specific Plan (MPSP). We are impressed by the proposed Guiding Principles and the plan's attention to how to integrate urban ecology with people spaces. However, because of its very vulnerable location adjoining the Bay, we think that the Bay edge should also be an inextricable part of the plan.

**Expand the Specific Plan Boundary:** We recommend that the boundary of the MPSP be expanded to relax the distinction between the developed areas and the adjacent baylands, and help design a truly resilient, ecologically responsible interface between the urban environment and the bay ecosystems.

We are looking for a Specific Plan designed to integrate realistic scientific solutions to sea level and ground water rise and flooding, and that expands and enhances bay ecosystems in the process of redevelopment.<sup>1</sup>

Expanding the Specific Plan boundary will provide the opportunity of:

- ✓ Including scientific studies of Sea level and Ground Water Rise as the natural, logical and realistic basis for land use in this Specific Plan for the next 30 years. Studies now indicate 3' of sea level rise by 2050 and 1' of sea level rise by 2030.
- ✓ Assuring that an adaptation plan will be an integral part of any proposed intensification of development in the City's vulnerable edge along the Bay.
- ✓ Cooperatively advancing nature-based strategies to improve community resilience to sea level rise and flood control while creating new habitat ecosystems and open space.

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<sup>1</sup> We are looking forward to the publication of the Sea Level Rise studies for the Plan area and are anxious to see how the results can be integrated into the MPSP planning scenarios.

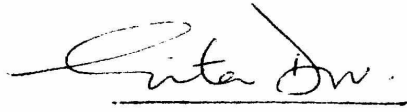
- ✓ Providing transparency about how those adjacent properties will be integral part of the plan area's future.

**For the Specific Plan area, we suggest the following for your consideration:**

1. **Create an Ecology Overlay Zone in line with Carribbean and First Streets** all the way to Moffett Field to allow expansion of wetlands for a resilient future. Employ Transfer of Development Rights or other incentives to compensate land owners and allow increased height or density in other parts of the plan area or beyond.
2. **Priority Conservation Areas:** Designate undeveloped shoreline as a Priority Conservation Area in order to leverage outside funds.
3. **Setbacks along flood channels:** Since the East and West Channels have been identified as potential “ecology connectors” as well as for flood management, include wide setbacks from the channels, and stepped back height limits, to allow wider flooding channels and green zones with softer berms instead of tall concrete flood walls along flood ditches to contain rising flood waters.
4. **Housing: Due to Sea Level Rise projections,** we ask that the plan locate housing on higher ground to prevent future residential displacement, and specifically curtail consideration of housing locations in the most vulnerable and ecologically sensitive locations (such as on the Lockheed property by the wetlands - Alternative C).
5. **Biodiversity and Open Space:** We suggest adding the word “biodiversity” to the Vision Statement. Include specific incentives to remove developed land and hardscape and create healthy habitat, open space and adaptation to SLR.
6. **Community benefits should include funding for Resilience to Sea Level Rise:** Since resilience is essential in the life span of all development in this area, consider that every new development contribute a substantial endowment share towards resilience, as part of community benefits.
7. **Green Link:** We are very supportive of the active mobility green network and suggest that these be called “Mobility Greenways” to tie in with the ecology terminology.

We look forward to working with you on this new Specific Plan area of Sunnyvale that prioritizes Ecology and Innovation.

Respectfully submitted,



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