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October 31, 2019

Mayor Karyl Matsumoto and Members of
South San Francisco City Council
Via e-mail: council@ssf.net

Subject: South San Francisco PUC Project – November 13, 2019 City Council Meeting

Dear Mayor Matsumoto and members of the South San Francisco City Council

Thank you for providing the opportunity for the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter Sustainable Land Use Committee (SLU) to comment on the proposed South San Francisco PUC project. SLU is the section of local Sierra Club chapter that advocates on land use issues like major development projects. As an environmental organization working towards reducing local greenhouse gas and other emissions, we encourage the development of higher density, mixed-use development near major transit stations.

As part of our efforts to encourage sustainable development we have established a set of **Guidelines for Residential, Commercial and Mixed-Use Transit Oriented Development** (TOD). These Guidelines include a scoring system for evaluation of projects.

Attached is our Guidelines with our current scoring for this project. After reviewing the plans and meeting with the developer, the PUC proposal received a total of 125 points; however, many of those points are for features that were given to us verbally by the developer, but are not yet final until they are included in either the Plans or the Development Agreement. We consider 100 points (out of a maximum possible score of 180) a minimum for consideration for supporting a project. We cannot however consider fully endorsing the project at this time, as we need to go through additional process steps which will require additional information.

The project scores well in all six areas of our Guidelines. We would like to highlight some of the main points below. Then provide a detailed list of the projects strengths as well as opportunities for improvement.

The project provides significant density of housing (135 units/ acre) which allows a very sizable amount of housing (800 units). This is very valuable given the housing crisis in the Bay Area. The 20% affordable units at low and very low income is particularly helpful. A project like this is beneficial to the environment by reducing auto travel by being near public transit and having many needed services accessible by walking or bicycle. The inclusion of unbundled parking, combined with a Residential Permit Parking Program will further reduce auto traffic and its attendant pollution including greenhouse gas

emissions. It will also help reduce local traffic congestion by reducing the number of cars that would be in the area.

The close linkage to BART and bus stops, combined with the unbundled parking, a Residential Parking Program, a clear Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan and Parking Plan will assure that local traffic is not negatively impacted.

The project contains a number of features that significantly improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the area including the Centennial Trail, BART, Mission Road and El Camino Real. This further reduces local traffic impacts and provides an attractive, healthy environment for all the residents of South San Francisco.

To summarize, we are pleased (based on the plans and on verbal assurances by the developer) that the proposal includes:

1. High density of 135 units/ acre
2. 20% affordable for low and very low income
3. Near BART and bus /shuttle lines as a TOD
4. On-site services for affordable units provided
5. Helps improve the local jobs/housing imbalance
6. Subsidize local business in the development
7. ~3 acres of public parks/open space
8. Includes pedestrian friendly sidewalks and intersections
9. Native landscaping, including Centennial Trail and Colma Creek
10. Public playgrounds and fitness stations
11. Open space done in conjunction with SSF Civic Campus planning
12. Funding of local public amenities
13. Day care facility
14. Reclaim Oak Street for community benefit
15. Bike share and repair
16. Connects to Centennial Trail system
17. Shared and unbundled parking
18. Monitored Traffic Demand Management Program
19. Lots of bicycle parking (1 per unit plus public/guest parking)
20. Expands pedestrian and bicycle paths
21. Ability to convert parking garages to other uses in future if parking demand drops
22. Electric car charging stations
23. Provides infrastructure to expand electric car charging stations in future
24. Near many local amenities (civic center, hospital, schools, shopping, restaurants, etc.)
25. All electric residential units

There are also areas where we encourage the city to seek possible additional benefits for the project. These include:

- A. Residential Permit Parking Program: **It is important to implement and especially important to enforce a parking permit program**, paid for by the PUC development, to protect surrounding residents from overflow parking.

- B. All of the positive aspects of the development listed (1–25) above should be included in the Development Agreement or as a Condition of Approval. **We urge the Commission to require that all the developer’s promises be codified in the Development Agreement and ensure that these are in fact executed.**
- C. **Providing subsidized transit passes for all residents for five years.** This will further improve the traffic situation to assure no negative impact on local traffic congestion.
- D. An increased level of affordable units to 25% would also enhance the project.

In addition, we have reviewed the draft Development Agreement and have the following recommendations:

- 1) **Remove the ability for the City to force the project to use bundled parking.** Imposing bundled parking will only add to traffic congestion, as it encourages the residents to own cars. Instead, tighten the requirements for a Residential Permit Parking Program and require that the Developer pays for enforcement. Enforcement should include late night towing. This will keep the resident’s cars out of the adjacent neighborhoods.
- 2) As mentioned in item B above, **the positive aspects of the development should be explicitly included in the Development Agreement or Conditions of Approval.** For example, the fact that the affordable housing will be very low and low income should be clear (item #2). Also, the fact that the units will be all electric should be explicit (item #25).

We ask that you consider the checklist in our attached Guidelines and our scoring as you consider this project.

Respectfully submitted:



Gita Dev

Co-chair, Sustainable Land Use Committee, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter (SCLP)

Cc James Eggers, Executive Director SCLP

Gladwyn D’Souza, Chair, Conservation Committee, SCLP

Attachment: Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, Guidelines for Residential, Commercial and Mixed Use Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) - scored for this project