



Thursday, September 24, 2009

Mayor Chuck Reed
And San Jose Councilmembers,
Planning Commissioners
200 East Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

RE: Ford and Monterey Housing Development Proposal - SUPPORT

Dear Mayor Reed and Councilmembers and Planning Commissioners,

For over 50 years, Greenbelt Alliance has protected the Bay Area's open spaces in part by promoting smart infill development in our existing cities and towns. Our Compact Development Team endorses and advocates for livable, transit-accessible communities with a wide range of housing options for families of all sizes and income levels. The Compact Development Team evaluated the Ford and Monterey Housing development, proposed by Eden Housing, using an established set of endorsement criteria. We have endorsed the project for a variety of reasons: first and foremost, due to its compactness, affordability, and superb infill location. Secondly, we applaud the developer's efforts to maximize the amount of much-needed affordable homes by providing parking in moderation. Finally, we believe that the pedestrian-friendly street frontage along Ford Road will both improve the existing urban fabric of the area as well as provide more open space for residents. We urge the Planning Commission and City Council's support of this project. Providing new homes, jobs, and shops along transit corridors is one of our best tools in limiting the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

With 95 homes situated on just over three acres, the Ford and Monterey Housing proposal translates into roughly 31 homes per square acre. New, compact homes within a city's existing urban footprint not only help to alleviate development pressure on the Bay Area's open spaces, but also use land and infrastructure more efficiently. Greenbelt Alliance also strongly applauds Eden Housing's decision to pursue 100 percent affordable homes here, including 19 units for the developmentally disabled, an often underserved and overlooked segment of the population. Furthermore, the location of the proposed development is particularly appropriate for infill homes—being within walking distance of a major shopping center, the Blossom Hill Caltrain station, a VTA 42 line bus stop, and Silver Leaf Park, residents will have access to retail, regional transit connections, and recreational facilities without needing to utilize a vehicle. Greenbelt Alliance hopes that the successful completion of this project will improve the chances of construction of the proposed pedestrian bridge across the Hitachi site, which would ultimately connect residents along Ford Road with VTA light rail at Cottle Station.

Greenbelt Alliance also strongly supports the developer's desire to provide a slightly reduced parking ratio for the development. This reduction is based on Eden Housing's studies of peak-parking usage at their other comparable developments in the Bay Area. Furthermore, the allowance of some street parking, along with planted bulb-outs in the Ford Street right of way, will offset the loss of a number of

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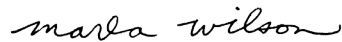
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on-site spaces, as well as further enhancing what is currently an isolating streetscape. We encourage the City of San Jose to pursue this approach moving forward as a win-win for the development and for the neighborhood.

Finally, Greenbelt Alliance is in support of Eden Housing's desire to enliven the Ford Street frontage with private patios for residents of these units. These patios will create critically important private open space for these three-bedroom family homes, while providing a semi-private buffer from the street edge. The patios also create a richer experience for the passerby, by creating a varied edge of patio, landscape, and individualized home entry points. The site is very tight, and without such an allowance, this important component of the plan may be eliminated.

We encourage the Planning Commission to support the Ford and Monterey Housing proposal. Doing so will mean taking a stand for the kind of high-quality, affordable infill development that will help protect the region's open spaces and contribute to a vibrant, diverse community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "marla wilson".

Marla Wilson
Sustainable Development Associate