December 13, 2021

City of Newark Planning Commission
37101 Newark Boulevard, Newark, CA
94560

Art Interiano
Deputy Community Development Director
City of Newark
37101 Newark Boulevard, Newark, CA
94560

Dear Planning Commissioners,

We are writing to respectfully voice our sincere concern to the Planning Commission regarding the proposed Mowry Village subdivision, located in Newark's shoreline "Area 3 and Area 4 Specific Plan". For many years, our organizations have advocated for permanent protection and restoration of Newark Area 4, and while the proposed development site ("Pick-n-Pull") does not demand the same level of concern as it is already developed, the site's high vulnerability to sea level rise and current zoning as park space must be carefully considered nonetheless.

With just 24 inches of sea level rise, which we can expect by 2050, and a common storm (once every 5 years), the "Pick-n-Pull" site will be inundated with up to 7 feet of water in some places. This is only a near-term projection, **with 48 inches of sea level rise, the "Pick-n-Pull" site will be permanently submerged** (Adapting to Rising Tides, BCDC). When sea levels rise, inundation will expose site contaminants that could then leach into the water supply and pose severe public health risks to residents and result in massive disruptions to adjacent ecological uses. This site should be remediated and repositioned for development as an appropriate use, such as a park, open space, or recreational use (as it is currently zoned) that is compatible with best available sea level rise

projections.

The “Pick-n-Pull” site is located in the midst of significant wildlife habitat and considerable restoration potential that should be embraced rather than squandered. With Alameda County already facing $15 billion in infrastructure and property at risk from sea level rise (“The impacts of Sea Level Rise on the San Francisco Bay, Pacific Institute, July 2012) - the 2nd most of any county in the state - and global wildlife species facing rapid declines, we all need to work together to quickly increase the resilience and adaptability of our communities and environment - not make these problems worse, as this development proposal would do.

We urge the Planning Commission to please consider our comments and carefully consider how to appropriately re-use the “Pick-n-Pull” site for uses that enhance the community, rather than place people, infrastructure, and economic assets, at risk. It is imperative that any development on this site incorporates adequate mitigation for both sea level rise and groundwater rise to accommodate development until at least 2100. As sea levels rise, any permanent use on this site will require higher and higher sea walls, increasing maintenance costs, and continuous infrastructure repairs that will likely require public funds. Please consider the long-term costs and risks associated with developing housing in a flood zone when considering whether to allow the Mowry Village project.

Respectfully,

Zoe Siegel
Director of Climate Resilience
Greenbelt Alliance

Carin High
Co-Chair
Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge

Martha Kreeger
Chair, Southern Alameda County Group
Sierra Club

Lisa Belenky
Senior Attorney
Center for Biological Diversity

Eric Buescher
Senior Staff Attorney
San Francisco Baykeeper

Jeff Miller
Director
Alameda Creek Alliance

Shani Kleinhaus
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

William Hoppes
President
Ohlone Audubon Society

William Yragui
Mission Peak Conservancy