



Berryessa Citizens Advisory Council

August 7, 2017

Council Member Lan Diep - District #4
San José City Hall
200 East Santa Clara Street
San José, CA 95113

Re: Bridge Housing per AB2176

Honorable Council Member Diep,

The Berryessa Citizens Advisory Council (BCAC) Board is opposed to the ill-considered proposal to site Bridge Housing on Noble Avenue. Further we are frustrated by the failure to engage the community of District 4 in a constructive dialog about the implementation of AB2176.

The BCAC is oldest neighborhood association in San José that allocates agenda time for elected officials at every monthly meeting, and yet neither the BCAC nor the larger community was effectively noticed or consulted. We want to play a constructive role in the justification for declaring a “homeless emergency” in San Jose that would trigger implementation of AB2176, and in developing Bridge Shelter siting criteria and regulations that would govern their operation.

Since the Bridge Shelter proposal and siting recommendation became public, leaders in the District #4 community have been flooded with e:mails and phone calls. Most of these communications express outrage at the lack of public notice/involvement and opposition to the proposed Noble Avenue site.

The San José Neighborhood Commission and Education Committee Memorandum (22May2017) established Bridge Shelter siting criteria that yielded only 22 unencumbered sites in a city of over 170 square miles. While the District #4 Noble Avenue site may meet the criteria of area and proximity to transit it fails to meet AB2176 requirement for “supportive and self-sufficiency development services.” Further, the Noble site has aspects we do not think have been considered: less than a ½ mile to four schools, undeveloped hillsides with high fire risk, and Santa Clara Valley Water District ground water percolation ponds.

Homelessness is a challenge for our community, and we all want to take constructive action. We took on the tax burden to fund Measure A that authorizes Santa Clara County to spend \$950,000,000 to address affordable housing and homelessness. And the LA Times (1Feb2016) article argues that counties, not

Founded in 1973, the Berryessa Citizens Advisory Council is a non-partisan neighborhood association representing the interests of citizens living and working in San Jose City Council District #4 and/or the Berryessa Union School District. BCAC meets at 7:00PM on the second Monday of each month at the Berryessa Community Center and everyone is welcome. Visit our web site at <https://berryessasj.wordpress.com/153-2/> or our Facebook page.

cities, have the primary responsibility for addressing homelessness "...because county institutions feed the streets and stoke the misery when they discharge people who have nowhere to go." But we do not see a justification for San José to declare a homelessness emergency which triggers AB2176. The 2017 Homeless Census shows

- No dramatic increase in the number of homeless (7,202 in 2007 and 7,394 ten years later or an increase of 0.3%/year)
- No dramatic increase in the unsheltered homeless (4,983 in 2007 and 5,448 ten years later or an increase of 0.9%/year)

And we are puzzled by the claims that local government is "Working towards a comprehensive...response to homelessness for over a decade" and has made "Significant strides in addressing homelessness." We can do better.

We also want the City Council to reject the Ad Hoc Homeless recommendation that there be a "...standardized minimum number of homeless housing units that must be met by all districts to ensure equality and fairness." Sites should be selected to best serve the homeless with "supportive and self-sufficiency development services" while considering risks. The alcohol/drug addiction and mental illness that plague so many of the chronic homeless makes proximity to health and rehabilitation service important.

The BCAC wants you to demand that the City Council direct the staff to institute an aggressive program of community engagement before taking any action to implement AB2176.

Regards,

Linda Locke

Linda Locke, President
Berryessa Citizens Advisory Council

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San José Mayor, Sam Liccardo
San José Director of Housing, Jacky Morales-Ferrand
Santa Clara County Supervisor District #3, Dave Cortese
Santa Clara Valley Water District Trustee, Richard Santos
Neighborhood Commission Chair, Pete Kolstad
Neighborhood Commission District #4 Representative, Mark Espinoza
Neighborhood Commission District #4 Representative, John Semanik

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