



Berryessa Citizens Advisory Council

Feb 16, 2021

Council Member David Cohen - District #4

San José City Hall

200 East Santa Clara Street

San José, CA 95113

Re: Proposed "Opportunity Housing" Changes to the San José General Plan

Honorable Council Member Cohen,

The Berryessa Citizens Advisory Council (BCAC) Board is **opposed** to the ill-considered proposal to the San Jose General Plan 2040 that would incorporate city-wide, by-right, zoning changes allowing conversion to multi-unit structures in areas currently zoned "single-family". If the City Council decides to allow further study of this matter, we expect nothing less than a ballot "opportunity" to express our opposition through activism and vote.

The current General Plan allows for 300,00 units without threatening stable, single-family neighborhoods like ours. But now the Task Force wants San José to "densify" not along transit corridors or in areas zoned for higher density but CITY WIDE. This is woeful policy for at least two reasons: the imbalance of taxes to cost of services, and random stresses on utilities infrastructure. For years we have been told that San José's finances are frustrated by an overabundance of housing compared to jobs. We have been told that housing "doesn't carry its weight" when taxes are netted out against cost of services. In Santa Clara County, San José has contributed a disproportionate share of housing, both market-rate and affordable. But this proposal will exacerbate the problem (housing to jobs mismatch) and produce costly ripple effects on our aging infrastructure (water, sewer, power, and parking). Without planning restrictions these multi-family units would scatter infrastructure stresses randomly across the city as owners opt to demolish and rebuild.

We listened to arguments by proponents that "Opportunity" housing would create neighborhoods that are more esthetically pleasing compared to single family neighborhoods. Well, each to his own taste, but we are proud of our

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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://berryessaji.wordpress.com/> or our Facebook page.

community and our neighbors. We believe San José single-family zoning was a PROMISE not to be lightly broken. We purchased our homes knowing the area was zoned "single-family", knowing this would demand a premium price, and knowing the property tax burden. To us the esthetics of single-family homes, the low-traffic streets, the quality schools, low crime rate, and our wonderful neighbors offset the cost burden. If we wanted to live in a fourplex we could move, but we chose not to have fourplex's move into our neighborhoods.

We are particularly offended by the statement included in the "Missing Middle Housing" December 18th presentation to the General Plan Task Force, that single-family zoning reflects "... inequitable housing policies that did not allow/made it harder non-white households to own and build equity." (sic). 2012 US Census, American Community Survey reported San Jose's self-identified Race/Ethnicity as 33.2% Hispanic, 32.8% Asian, 27.6 White, 2.8% African American and 3.6 % other. But here in Berryessa we are proud to have 60% of our population tracing their heritage to Asia. For 30 years the BCAC has annually celebrated one of the ethnic communities that have contributed to our history and community.

City Council Member Cohen, should you wish to engage with the BCAC leadership and/or its membership on this or any other issues facing city governance, we will accommodate you.

Regards,



Linda Locke, President
Berryessa Citizens Advisory Council

cc

San José Mayor, Sam Liccardo
Members of the San José City Council D#1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10
San José Director of Housing, Jacky Morales-Ferrand
Santa Clara County Supervisor District #3, Otto Lee
California State Senator District #10, Bob Wieckowski
California Assembly Member District 25, Alex Lee

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