



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area
97 Hillview Avenue, Los Altos, CA 94022**

November 10, 2014

Mayor Clark and Members of the City Council
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: Council Meeting, November 12
Agenda Item 6.3 Development at 1101 El Camino Real West (Harv's)

Dear Mayor Clark and Members of the Council:

The LWV would like to comment on Regis Homes' housing proposal for 1101 El Camino West. First, we are pleased to see a housing developer using the State Density Bonus Law, as we have seen this law used successfully in other cities, including Los Altos with the Marie Callender site, as a way to produce below-market-rate units ("BMRs") after Palmer.

Although we are always pleased to see units built that are targeted to very low-income households, as this is where the greatest need is, our concerns are those we expressed in our letter to the EPC and that are well-stated on pages 12-13 of the current staff report. Often these households have difficulty qualifying for initial financing, and more importantly, do not have sufficient resources to handle increases in HOA fees or property assessments. For those reasons, we urged that these units be rented instead of sold. Since Sares-Regis is managing the rental units nearby at the Marie Callender site, it seems feasible that they could manage these units.

Should the rental option not be possible, we endorse the staff proposal to set aside the BMR in-lieu fee collected for the fractional unit for the project. The availability of these funds at the time of special assessments, unexpected repairs, or other financial crises that might be difficult for these very low-income households to manage could be an important resource.

We applaud staff for describing the very legitimate concerns regarding very low-income ownership BMRs. Los Altos, by the way, changed its ordinance just after the very-low-income units referenced were marketed in 2009; ownership units now are mostly targeted to moderate-income households, as is the case in nearby communities. We especially compliment staff for proposing a unique and helpful resource, earmarking the BMR in-lieu fee of \$41,500, for future help for these homeowners.

Housing Committee

LWV of the Los Altos-Mountain View Area

cc. Dan Rich	Lindsay Hagan
Jannie Quinn	Linda Lauzze
Randy Tsuda	Gerry Beaudin
Terry Blount	