



March 7, 2021

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

Re: Study Session, March 9, Agenda Item 3.1 – Google Middlefield Park Master Plan

Dear Mayor Kamei and Members of the City Council:

The LWV supports government action to provide affordable housing for all Californians; therefore we are enthusiastic about the Google Middlefield Park Master Plan with up to 1900 housing units including a large affordable housing component. We are pleased to see the phasing so that the jobs/housing linkage is preserved throughout the process. The proposed parkland, pedestrian-bike bridge land dedication and the community benefits package are all praiseworthy; Google's vision for building commercial and residential development around existing transit is commendable.

Our hesitation is with the Alternative Mitigation Plan for affordable housing. Staff has pointed out clearly the pros and cons of inclusionary vs. land dedication with all-affordable housing developments. We see the advantage of the land dedication allowing deeper affordability, targeting those who are in most need of housing that is not provided by the market. Perhaps a compromise allowing land dedication but requiring some percentage of the units to be built as below-market rate (BMRs) would be possible. This would ensure that at least the inclusionary units would be built simultaneously with the market-rate housing.

We hope the City can devise strategies to enable the all-affordable projects to be built on the dedicated land to proceed quickly, as the potential delay in actual construction of these stand-alone developments is our biggest concern.

We note that staff has not completed its analysis to determine whether the alternative mitigation proposed is compliant with the BMR regulations. We believe this is important in order not to set a bad precedent. We are optimistic that the City and Google can work together to reach a solution that allows this outstanding proposal to proceed as rapidly as possible. With the various fees Google is paying and the numerous parts of the Master Plan, we hope there is room for negotiating for a win-win on the affordable housing component.

We do support an expedited review process. We would also support an SB 35 streamlined process for the stand-alone affordable housing. The length of time that is currently required for developments from inception to completion is one of the reasons that California has fallen so far short in its production of housing.

Thank you for considering our input. (Please submit any questions about this letter to Donna Yobs at dmyobs@yahoo.com)

Lisa McLain, President LWV of Los Altos Mountain View
Donna Yobs, Co-Chair, Housing Committee

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